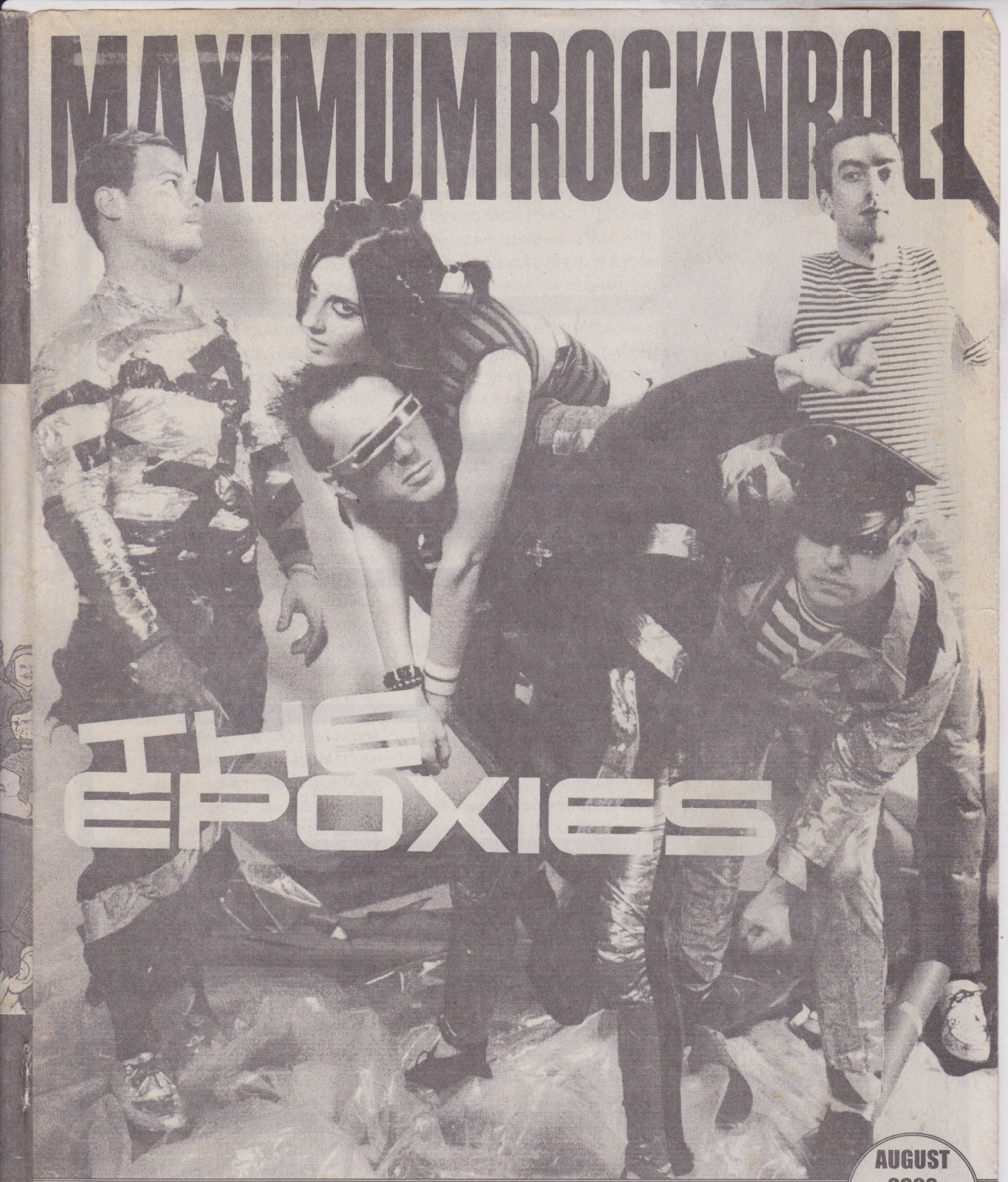
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL



THE PIXIES

PLUS: AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ • TOYS THAT KILL • DIRT • SCHIZOPHRENIC RECORDS AND MUCH MORE

AUGUST
2002
#231
$3

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
Back issues #148, 150-154, 156-159, 161-163, 166-181, 184-230 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $25
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $70
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $80
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $125

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads properly sized on paper.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible. Cash only!!! Expect a two month backlog!

COVER: Mike Thorn

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Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:

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TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

SCHOLASTIC DETH-Killed By School-EP	HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"	THE PROWL-What Are You Doing?-EP
TOTAL FURY-Commited to the Core-EP	BOMB POPS-Everything Looks Like Her-EP
MODERAT LIKVIDATION-Kuknancke-LP	ARTESIANS/WOODY CARR-split-EP
THE STAND BY ME-In My Car-45	TRAGEDY/AP'S ARMÉ/MOTÖRHEAD-live

ROB COONS

SCHOLASTIC DETH-Killed By-EP & live	YACOPSAE/TUMULT-split-EP
SHOCK TROOP-Your Worst Nightmare-EP	UCA-Self Infliction-CD
CRUCIAL UNIT-Moshzilla-EP & live	NARCOSIS-Heart Slows Down-LP
TOTAL FURY-Commited-EP & live	ARTIMUS PYLE-Absence of Life-EP & live
AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP & live	FEEDERZ-CD reissues & live

ORWEN CURRY

ENDS-EP/SHOT GUN-Dawn It!-EP	WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Human Meat-EP
AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP & live	HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
KANSTALAISTOTTELEMATTOMUUS-EP	SCHOLASTIC DETH-Killed By School-EP
BORN/DEAD-EP/Slug & Lettuce #71	ANOTHER OPPRESSIVE SYSTEM-EP
ARTIMUS PYLE-EP/GOSSIP-10"	NECKTIE PARTY/PLOT TO BLOW...-split EP

JONATHON FLOYD

SWEET J.A.P.-live	LOS CREEPERS-Punk Rock Since '96-CD
HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP	HERO DISHONEST/REBOUND-split EP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"	GC5-live
KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP	SCHOLASTIC DETH-Killed By School-EP
TOTAL FURY-Commited to the Core-EP	GOSSIP-Arkansas Heat-10"

JEFF HEERMANN

THE SERMON-live	KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP
SUBTONIX/GLASS CANDY-split-EP	LET IT BURN-This is the Second-10"
KILL-A-WATTS-live	SCAT RAG BOOSTERS-I Mean It-45
FUSES-Sodium Pentathol Negative-EP	JEWWS-L'Explosion Du Sou Maintenant-LP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"	ACCIONE MUTANTE-Must Be Stopped-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

ERADICATE/SUPERHELICOPTER LTD.-LP	AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP/NUBS-CD
COACHWHIPS-Flag Day live	HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"
JEWWS-L'Explosion-LP/*Cockettes*-film	SERGEANT'S MESS-When You Were-EP
MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE-EP	MANGANZOIDES-CD/BOMB POPS-EP
FEEDERZ-CD reissues & live/SPINNS-45	MIDNIGHT THUNDER EXPRESS-LP

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP	ACCIONE MUTANTE-Must Be Stopped-EP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"	FUSES-Sodium Pentathol Negative-EP
JEWWS-L'Explosion Du Sou Maintenant-LP	STUPID BABIES GO MAD-Kichican-EP
SCAT RAG BOOSTERS-Sidetracked-EP	DEL-GATORS-LP/THE SERMON-live
OFFBEATS-Dumb Looks Still Free-LP	SERGEANT'S MESS-When You Were-EP

RAY LUJAN

YUM YUMS-Blame It on the Boogie-LP	PITS-Belief in Ruins-45
SUICIDE MILKSHAKE-Too Scared to Sniff-CD	BOMB POPS-Everything Looks Like Her-EP
RANDY-Cheater-CD	ENDS-Jump Ship-EP
THE STAND BY ME-In My Car-45	LET IT BURN-This is the Second-10"
SUBTONIX/GLASS CANDY-split EP	HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP & live	NIKAD-Man Or Machine-LP
CRUCIAL UNIT-Moshzilla-EP	SCHOLASTIC DETH-Killed By School-EP
GOSSIP-Arkansas Heat-10"	SS-The Original-12"/TRAGEDY-live
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"	SERVICE ANXIETY-Persistent Inversion-EP
NECKTIE PARTY/PLOT TO BLOW...-split EP	MUSIC/NINJA-Record Player & Me-EP

WILLIE NELSON

ENDLESSLY ON TOUR...

DONNA POOLE

HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP	ENDS-Jump Ship-EP
JED WHITEY-Mongoloid Cage Match-LP	AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-Blod Ser Mere-EP
YUM YUMS-Blame It on the Boogie-LP	LOCAL OAFS-TBA-EP
JEWWS-L'Explosion Du Sou Maintenant-LP	STUPID BABIES GO MAD-Kichican-EP
MUSIC/NINJA-Record Player & Me-EP	RED FLAG 77-Moving On Top-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

ADOLF & THE PISS ARTISTS-March Of-CD	NAILED DOWN-Perth Wolfpack-LP
GC5/HUDSON FALCONS/MOTÖRHEAD-live	RED FLAG 77-Moving On Top-EP
AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP & live	VIRUS-Nowhere-CD/SHOCK TROOP-EP
BOILS/BRIGATE ROZZE-split EP	THE PROWL-What Are You Doing?-EP
LOS FASTIDIOS-Radio Boots-EP	D.S.B.-Radical Sharp Shot-EP/HUL-LP

MIKE THORN

AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ-EP & live	V/A-Tampere vs. Portland-EP
CRUCIAL UNIT-Moshzilla-EP & live	BOILS/BRIGATE ROZZE-split EP
BORN/DEAD-EP/PARAGRAF 119-LP	STUPID BABIES GO MAD-EP/D.S.B.-EP
HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP	ARTIMUS PYLE-EP/YANKEE WUSS-LP
WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Human Meat-EP	SEPTICEMIA/AMOR, PROTESTO Y ÓDIO-LP

RYAN WELLS

ACCIONE MUTANTE-Must Be Stopped-EP	A-FRAMES-live
MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE-EP	HOT HOT HEAT-Keep My Name Out-EP
SHOES THIS HIGH-The Nose One-EP	SERVICE ANXIETY-Persistent Inversion-EP
KILL THE HIPPIES-Spasms In New Age-CD	KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP
HUL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP	DEL-GATORS-Pound Down-LP

KENNY KAOS/REMA YOUNG

F-HOLE-I Need a Drink-EP	THE SERMON/COMETS ON FIRE-live
PITS-Belief in Ruins-45	ENDS-Jump Ship-EP/HACKSAW-45
YUM YUMS-Blame It on the Boogie-LP	STUPID BABIES GO MAD-Kichican-EP
SLUMBERJACK-Nitro Ground Shaker-LP	HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Directed By-10"
JEWWS-L'Explosion Du Sou Maintenant-LP	Reviewing Records for MRR! Miss you all! -RY

ZINE TOP TEN

Radio State #3	Unidad Punk Libertaria #13
All This Is Mine #7	Weiner Society #5
Black Thorn #1	Alternative Press Review #7
Irony Is Dead #1	Zonked #6
Scutter #9	As They Drop Bombs #1

ZINE SHITWORKERS

Peter Avery	Aragorn
Michelle Barnhardt	Jerry Booth
Tim Brooks	Amy Browne
Kat Case	Karoline Collins
Robert Collins	Rob Coons
Carl Cordova	Paul Curran
Andy Darling	Mikel Delgado
Aaron Detroit	Ben Ditch
Adrienne Droogas	Sean Dougan
Jonathan Floyd	Gardner Fusuhara
Doug Grime	Jax Grime
Lance Hahn	Chris Hall
Harald Hartmann	Jeff Heermann
Vince Horner	George Impulse
Chloe Jensen	Kenny Kaos
Carolyn Keddy	Melissa Klein
Dulcinea Loudmouth	Gabe Lucas
Michael Lucas	Ray Lujan
Jesse Luscious	Hal MacLean
Bobby Manic	Jeff Mason
Tobia J. Minckler	Megan March
Allan McNaughton	Mark Murrmann
Jennifer Mushnick	C. Nellie Nelson
Mimi Nguyen	Joshua Peach
Donna Poole	Roy Rahlfling
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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#167/Apr '97. Grand Theft Audio, No Fraud, Gauze, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, Danko Jones, Viceroys, Forgotten.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, UK Subs, Distemper, Enewetak, Fields Of Shit.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Pelado Recs, Misanthropists, Racetraitor, Violent Society, Knuckleheads.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#176/Jan '97. Scared of Chaka, Voorhees, Stalingrad, Upstairs People, Squid Boy, Izgoy, Beltones, Sky Grain, 1,4,5s, Ducky Boys, JCCCamp.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City , Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#212/Jan '00. Avail, Born Dead Icons, From Ashes Rise, the Voids, the Guilty Pleasures, xLimpwristx, Chachi on Acid.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. SOLD OUT!!!

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

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Dear *MRR* readers...
Below you'll find a list of distros in Europe who have taken up the slack since our departure from Mordam... We've been doing our best to cover as much of territory outside of the U$A as we can, but we still need your help in establishing contacts with like minded punx who are willing to help us out... We're providing this list to you in order to let you know where you can currently get your monthly fix of MRR... but we're always looking for more help; so if you do a distro, would be interested in selling *MRR* at shows, or just going in with a crew of friends to get a cheaper post rate—get in touch and we'll tell you the details! Any and all help is very much appreciated. Please also note that Assembly Line is now offering a subscription service for the UK, cheap! This is just the beginning...thanks again for all your support...

Arwen, Mike, & Clara

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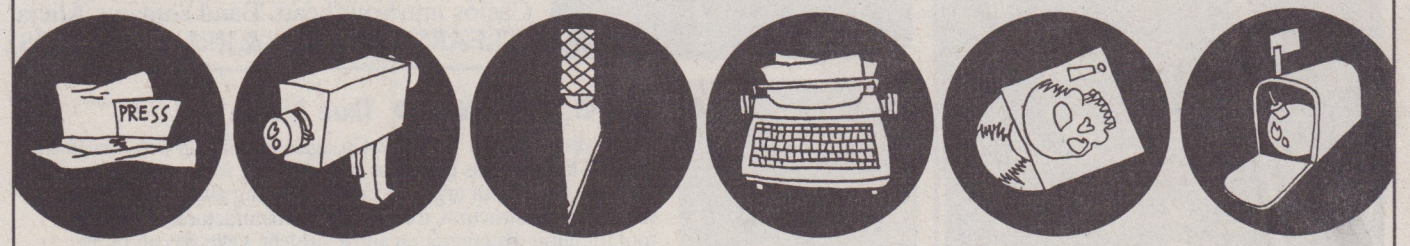

Band Interviews, Zine Interviews, Guest Columns, Letters, Articles, News, Videos, Or Anything The D.I.Y. Punk Community Might Be Interested In Reading About. Send It In, Maximum RocknRoll Is What You Make It!

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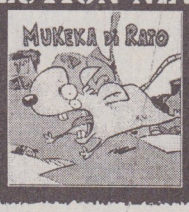
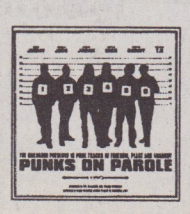
SOUND POLLUTION NEW RELEASES





HELLNATION
Thrash Wave CD
36 songs in 30 minutes. Full on high speed HC fury from EP's and comps from the last 5 years. Hammering thrash that sounds much better than ever. Includes songs from *split EP w/ MERDA, EP w/ SINK, V/A TWBW, Thrash Or Die EP, At War With Emo 5", and V/A Homeless Benefit EP.*

MUKEKA DI RATO
Acabar Com Voce CD
Acabar Com Voce means Destroy You - and it will. 14 songs of raging Brazilian HC. Energetic speed, catchy brutality, and great sing alongs.

ALLERGIC TO WHORES
The Lipstick Murders CD
17 new songs from Cleveland's ALLERGIC TO WHORES. Driving energetic HC with a suprising amount of melody. Fast HC fornicating with the Misfits. CD also includes an entire live show!

KRIGSHOT
Orebro Mangel LP/CD
Raw, hammering hardcore with no mercy executed in pure Scandi thrash tradition. 24 new songs! Thought it was impossible to top *Maktmissbrukare*? Think again.

UNCURBED
Punks On Parole LP/CD
16 new anthems of punishing hardcore punk, bombarding sound. Consistently one of the best bands on the planet. Build an altar now.

EXCLAIM
Critical Exploder LP/CD
Long awaited debut full length from Tokyo's high energy, high speed HC maniacs. Full blown fuzzed out distort thrash. CD includes the much sought after "Out Of Suit" EP.

V/A TOMORROW WILL BE WORSE CD
8 bands, 44 songs, from basically a who's who of the best hardcore thrash bands from the U.S. and Japan. From the U.S.: Capitalist Casualties 4 songs, Hellnation 7 songs, Spazz 5 songs, Charles Bronson 7 songs. From Japan: Flash Gordon 4 songs, Nice View 5 songs, Fuck On The Beach 6 songs, Real Reggae 6 songs.

NINE SHOCKS TERROR
Paying Ohmage LP/CD
11 new caustic HC assaults with a recording that does them justice. You will be floored. This fucker rocks x 100! "This is fucking greatness, or the closest we're gonna get this millennium" M.R.R.

also available: ALLERGIC TO WHORES *Shadows* ... CD, Y *Global Player* LP/CD, V/A TOMORROW WILL BE WORSE Vol. 2 LP/CD, WHN? *Stand Fast...* LP/CD, SCALPLOCK *On Whose Terms?* LP/CD, KRIGSHOT *Och Hotet Kvarstar* 7"EP, MEANWHILE *Same Shit New Millennium* LP/CD, UNCURBED *Keeps The Banner High* LP/CD, lots more...

MCR CO. JAPAN RELEASES

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Fukuoka intense raw hardcore punk attack!!!
EXTERMINATE "Ideal & Reality" MCD
Forcefull 80's Japanese HC reckless destruction. x- REALITY CRISIS & ORDER.
THE FUTURES "Electric Wave From... CD
16 songs of frantic HC punk thrash from Osaka. Awesome!
THE SOLUTION "I'm Pissed Off" MCD
Oi!skin band from Gifu, x-United 97 members.
ARGUE DAMNATION "N.N.N.N."MCD
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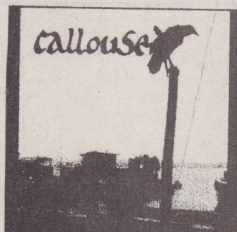


Calloused 7" final output from this Minneapolis unit. 4 new tracks of female fronted HC / punk.

Scorned LP 1st full release by Mpls thrashers. 10 blasts of raw HC punk w/ male / female vox.

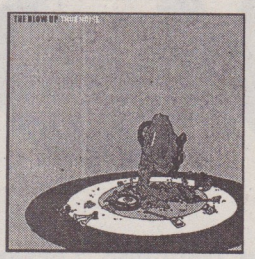
Path Of Destruction 7" old school hardcore from Mpls. think Poison Idea / Neg. approach

7" $3 / $4 / $5 air US / N. America / World
LP $8 / $10 / $12 US / N. America / World

Sin Fronteras - PO Box 8004
Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA
sfr666@aol.com

Lost Sounds
Black Wave CD/Double LP

Here it is, Black Wave, the follow up to 2000's album of the year "Memphis Is Dead" on Big Neck. This record is going to, and has, annihilated every formerly-emo-now-we're-into-New-Order-instruction-manual bullshit to come down the pike using their emaciated frames to try and flaccidly dry-hump their Casios into your heart. Band contains Alicja (CLEARS, FITTS), Jay & Rich (REATARDS).



The BlowUp *True Noise CD*

Seattle distortionists, The Blow Up, again teaming up with movement leader Tim Kerr, has graced us with a twelve song mindbender that states its point with urgent accuracy. Toiling away at machines of their own construction, the group has manufactured a compact tool for aural disintegration and a strident wake up call to the nostalgic flock of baying sheep steadfastly refusing to acknowledge their existence in the moment that is RIGHT FUCKING NOW!

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Dead Moon
Trash & Burn LP/CD

Yes, finally a new Dead Moon CD! After spending much of last year touring the US including a rousing show at The Vegas Shakedown, Dead Moon went home and turned out this gem. Dead Moon is fronted by Fred Cole, a living rock-n-roll legend (check out The Lollipop Shoppe)

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AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ AVAILABLE IN JUNE! Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud På Film 7" Second ep from Danish HC ragers. Sounds like the missing Dischord 7" from 1981 or lost Black Flag sessions from 1980 but in Danish! On tour in the US this summer. **HC 7028**

VITAMIN X Down the Drain Second full length. Fast intense Hardcore from Holland. The perfect mix between Straight Edge youth crew and fast-core thrash. Touring the USA this spring. **LP HC1207 ♿ CD HC5007**

WOLFBRIGADE Progression/Regression Havoc brings you more savage Swedish Hardcore. Wolfbrigade (formerly known as Wolfpack) shred your ears with a total Scandinavian d-beat crustcore assault. Vinyl version is a Picture Disc! Split release w/ Farewell records of Germany. **LP HC 1206 [PICTURE DISK] ♿ HC 5006**

CAUSTIC CHRIST S/T Two guys from Aus Rotten, 1 from React and 1 from Submachine combine to create a new hardcore powerhouse. Combining the stylings of early Corrosion of Conformity with faster Swedish hardcore resulting in a manic HC sound. **HC 7028**

RIISTETYT Tervetuola Kuolema One of the great Finnish hardcore bands of the 80s returns. No weak rehash here, full on hard driving Finnish style hardcore that put Tampere on the map! Licensed from Fight Records, remixed with a bonus track! **HC 7027**

IDENTITY PARADE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN, 1995–2000
150 Pages, Black & White, Hardcover Havoc records is proud to present our first effort at publishing. Kristofer Pasanen has compiled an amazing book of his live photographs of bands taken over the last five years. Hundreds of bands are photographed from Crust to SE to Emo; see the website for a complete list. **HC-IDP [BOOK]**

SKITSYSTEM Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen Second LP from the masters of dark Swedish hardcore. Heavy and brutal b-beat mixed with crusty HC and thrash styles. A pulverizing steamroller of Swedish hardcore. Split release with No Tolerance Records of Sweden. **LP HC1205 ♿ CD HC5005**

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass The "lost" LP re-issued. This is a totally remastered and remixed second release of the hard to get first LP which came out on Devour Records of Japan in 1999. An over the top wall of thrash. Brutal no-holds-barred sonic assault. This is the most powerful material by the most intense band in hardcore today. **LP HC1204**

MISERY The Early Years Incl. the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7"s, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. **CD HC5004**

HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP / CD Crucial hardcore from Minnesota's Holding On! Mixes the crunch of Judge and Chain of Strength with the anger and raw power of Negative Approach. Totally pissed off, raw, powerful Hardcore! Split release with THD, Havoc and 1% records. **LP HC1203 ♿ CD HC5003**

DS•13 Killed by the Kids One of the best bands in hardcore today. Amazing second LP of early 80s-style thrash/ HC/ punk. Excellent production, Pushead cover art. **LP HC1202 ♿ CD HC5002**

VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward To Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/ HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. **HC1201**

CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994–2000 All the 7"s and comp tracks with one unreleased song. **HC 5001**

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

TEAR IT UP S/T Ex Dead Nation, killer fast hardcore with lots of drive and energy. **HC7024**

DS•13 / CODE 13 13 song split 7" Sweden and Minnesota united in fast, raw hardcore pride. **HC7023**

REAL ENEMY / HOLDING ON Twin Cities Hardcore split 7" Political straight edge and youth crew hardcore. **HC7022.5**

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror Unit 7" EP Awesome raw fast thrash from Cleveland. **HC7022**

KAAOS Nukke Re-issue 1985 Finnish HC, classic stuff. **HC7021**

CLUSTERBOMBUNIT...and the Dirty Little Weapons 7" EP Brutal dis-core from Stuttgart, Germany. **HC7020**

UNITED SUPERVILLAINS (USV) Escapist 7" EP crucial fast HC similar to old Boston bands like DYS, Siege and SSD full speed ahead! **HC7019**

SPAZM 151 S/T 7" EP Second 7" by this Texas HC powerhouse. Hardcore like Black Flag, Poison Idea or Battalion of Saints. **HC7018**

DEMON SYSTEM 13 Aborted Teen Generation 7" EP U.S. press of this amazing Swedish hardcore band, fast aggressive powerful old-school hardcore. **HC7017**

CODE-13 A Part Of America Died Today 7" EP Third and best EP from Minnesota thrash punk defenders of the faith–twelve songs. **HC7016**

TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopattu 7" EP Demo and comp tracks from this crucial Finnish hardcore band of the early 80s. **HC7015**

TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa 7" EP More incredible Finnish thrash hardcore first released in '83. **HC7014**

NOTA/BROTHER INFERIOR split 7" Tulsa, Oklahoma's best hardcore old and new. **HC7013**

PROTESTI S/T 8 track EP Originally released as a demo in 1983, this is Finnish HC in the classic Propaganda Records style. **HC7012**

HEIST Pain Is Causing Life 7" EP Wicked fast and brutal HC in the Infest tradition. Second EP by this Australian thrash outfit. **HC7011**

DISTRAUGHT S/T 7" EP Brutal heavy hard-core from Brooklyn, NYC. New remixed second press with bonus track. **HC7010**

MURDERERS S/T 7" EP Legendary chaos punk/ HC. Manic HC-punk like Disorder, much more thrash than their recent stuff. **HC7009**

CODE-13 They Made a Wasteland and Called it Peace Furious hardcore punk from beneath the streets of Minneapolis. **HC 7008**

H-100'S Texas Death Match 7" Snotty, harsh, early 80s hardcore with a seriously bad attitude. 3/4 of Nine Shocks Terror. **HC 7007**

MASSKONTROLL Warpath 7" EP Brutal Swedish-style hardcore similar to No Security, Doom, etc. ex-Resist, pre-Detestation. **HC7006**

CODE-13 Doomed Society 7" EP Blistering hardcore punk. Ex-Destroy but more of a punk/HC sound than full-on grind. **HC7005**

BRISTLE System 7" EP Rip roaring old school punk/HC from Seattle, powerful and catchy. **HC7004**

AUSROTTEN Fuck Nazi Sympathy 7" EP All-out punk attack similar to Varukers, Discharge, Conflict. **HC7003**

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE In a Few Hours of Madness 7" EP Diverse political punk, similar to Conflict at their peak. **HC7002**

DESTROY Burn this Racist System Down 7" EP Raging political hard-core in the vein of Doom, ENT, Disrupt. Our first release, from 1992. **HC 7001**

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Expect a 2-week turn- around on record/CD orders and a 3–4 week turnaround on T-shirts, which are printed to order. Overseas orders, especially surface mail, will take much longer. Bullet belts are also available in the USA. You will need approx. 2 links for each inch of hip meas., available in brass, 30¢ each and chrome, 60¢ each.

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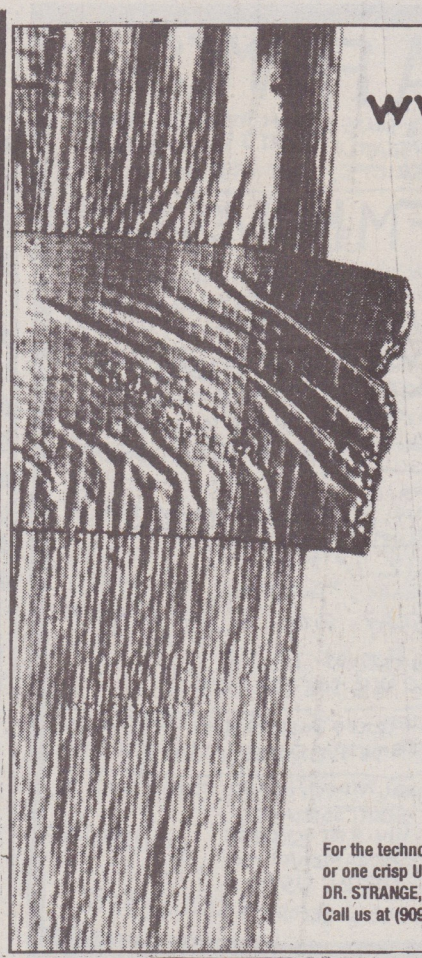

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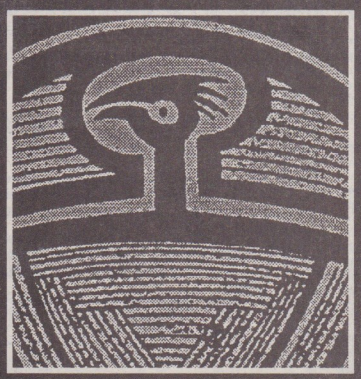

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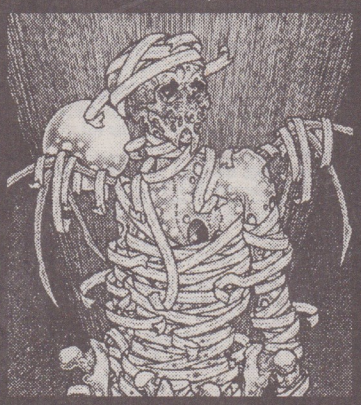

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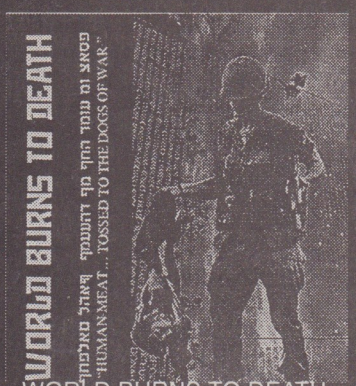

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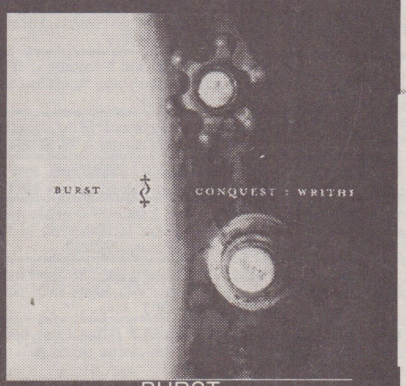

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to maximumrnr@mindspring.com. No response guaranteed.

MRR—

Dee Dee is dead, I´m sure he will be missed by his close friends, I never met the guy so really... what's it to me? What is important is that he did give us great songs and a great band like The Ramones and for that I thank him. First it was, "so long Joey!" now it´s "farewell Dee Dee!" I hope you're all ok out there, I hope you´re still rockin', wherever you are!

Drugs suck, they keep taking away some great talent and great people, I wish drugs would do something productive for once and take away the real jerks in this world (hint: George W. Bush, Fred Durst, The Strokes... you get the idea) instead of people who do no harm to the world and those around them. Peace and love for you all. Oh, and please... *Stay the fuck away from drugs!!! Or do you still not get it??!!* This message is courtesy of Redencion Nueve Once Public Relations Department.

Joao da Silva/ joao@idealpolitik.org

Hey Maximumrockandrollers!

Congratulations on the 20th anniversary! It's been said elsewhere, but I too think that *Maximumrockandroll* is the better now than it's ever been. Kudos to Arwen and Mike! I appreciate the critical politics, the excellent news section, and frankly, as a fan of the faster end of the punk spectrum, the emphasis on hardcore. My only gripe would be that the movie reviewers so often review mainstream or big indie films that already get enough press as it is. Maybe it takes a little bit more effort, but if you live in a bigger metropolitan centre, smaller independent films, documentaries, animation, arty videos, are all pretty easy to seek out. Independent documentaries especially are really good sources of in-depth information and an alternative to the usual propaganda. Jay Dead's Punk Movie Nights is cool though... since he does review punk movies! Anyway, all the best, Marek.

Dear Arwen,

Kudos to you and the rest of the gang for the interesting way that MRR is evolving. The emphasis on content and readability are refreshing and I'm glad to see that MRR isn't getting bogged down in that terminal lack of a sense of humor that plagues so many others in this zine world. That being said, I have a tiny gripe. I read all the columns each month, and while I often disagree with things that are said, I never really feel the need to write in about it. However your column last month forced me to write in to express an opinion.

I got into punk rock when I was 13. I was 13 way back in 1986. The first punk thing I bought was Dead Kennedy's *Bedtime for Democracy.* I think that this is important to note, as I think that one album set the tone for my belief system. I got acquainted with all the problems that the community was privy to really early on--mainly elitism, crew-style conformity, and the ridiculousness of in-fighting. Let's just say that I was given a lesson in disenfranchisement just as my interest was growing

By 1991, I was done with the whole thing. In St. Louis, the scene had become dominated by skinheads, and whether SHARP, straightedge, Nazi or whatever, they all had one thing in common: violence. Shows were no longer a place to meet and feel that sense that you were with "your" people. The insular quality of the live show was replaced with a sense that at any time your crew would be targeted, usually without reason, and become the object of a boot party. I didn't have a "crew" so my friends and I were just given crew status by all the other goose stepping boneheads here. The few punks who hadn't gone the way of the boot had become so fucking elitist that they wouldn't open a dialogue with anyone else--it didn't matter if those people had the same belief system, because apparently it was all about a haircut. It got down to the whole "what color are the laces in his boots" quality of interaction. I realized that my concerns for human rights, the environment, building communities, and basic freedom of expression were all totally ignored by the punk and hardcore scene, not only in my town it seemed, but with everyone that I encountered from other scenes as well. All that mattered was what color suspenders you wore and whether or not you drank beer... little lifestyle bullshit that had the same manufactured importance of any pop culture fad. *Fuck*! I dropped punk and went my own way.

I found my way back due to my love of zines (I never stopped reading them, I just stayed clear of exclusively "punk" zines). By 1995 I was cautiously involved again, and happy to say that even though the idiotic subcultures that had developed in the interim ("fuck no I'm not into emo, I'm into power emocore grind!") were off-putting, it seemed like something of the concerns that attracted me to punk in the first place had been restored. But there's this one little note, as expressed in your column, that really crimps my spine. The fucking elitism.

You say at one point that punk rockers are the cutest. Whatever you want to think, I guess—to me it's hard to tell exactly who *is* a punk rocker these days, unless they're of the anachronistic crusty drunk punk breed, but to each their own. My problem is when you went on to say: "This is also why hippies and other weirdos on the street try to talk to punks as if they are on the same team, offering them green buds and so on. Punks will have none of this and respond, appropriately, with scorn."

Excuse me? Maybe you should also advocate that white people should respond with scorn to black people? Or perhaps that people of different religious ideas shouldn't have a meaningful exchange with one another? I realize that I'm stretching a bit here, but really it's not that much of a stretch. One of the absolute worst things about punk is the tendency for punks to believe that they are the chosen ones, the only ones with any sense about things, and that the rest of the popula-

tion is a bunch of muddled, empty headed good-for-nothings. The important thing, for all of us, is to build consensus, share ideas and above all increase awareness that we are being fucked by the power structures of the world and need to gather the weirdos, hippies, punks, and all the other people who live on society's margins together. The only real way to enact change is to be willing to change yourself. That means sticking to your principles, not to your perception that your group has the best hairstyle.

I realize that I'm being very humorless here, but I really feel there is a tendency in our little clique to instill in people a cultural elitism. At one point I was sitting with my ex-wife in a bar here in St. Louis, and some of my younger punk pals spotted she and I. They'd never met her, and later were extremely curious as to why I was talking to one of "those people." You see, my ex went from being a punk/wave hybrid, to being one of the normals. Gone were the Chuck Taylor's and the Ramones t-shirts and the torn jeans (her costume for years)--she had become one of the mall shoppers. Yeah, she's lame, sure. But the hilarious thing to me is that I got scorned for talking to a girl who was punk before these guys had even made it to grade school. She just changed.

All I'm saying is, please don't perpetuate punk rock elitism. *Do* talk to those hippies and weirdos--they may have something to impart to you, and you may be able to give them something to carry away with them as well. Reserve your scorn for those who punish people for being different. Heap scorn on the bigots, the jingoists, the people who say you are going through a phase (although with fifteen years experience, I can tell you that most people who are into punk today won't be in five years.) Give those people all of your rancor, spit venomous words at them... fucking chuck rocks at them, I say! But the people who have fallen off the gravy train of blindness that is the reality for Joe Q. Average, those are the people that can make a difference. Talk to them, hang out with them, and have lives with them. There is always room to learn, and there is lots to teach. By limiting either you damper the possibility that any real change will ever happen in the world.

Again, don't get me wrong. What you're doing at MRR is an invaluable resource. Also, please don't consider this a personal attack. It's just that I have a problem with seeing people who are opposed to racism, sexism, oppression, and authoritarian power structures replacing those evils with other ones like cultural superiority, and scorn for people who's fashion and music tastes don't mimic their own. As soon as you write the Punk Rock Rule Book and Code of Behavior, you have ruined everything that punk means. If MRR is to be considered the "bible of punk" (a label so odd and ridiculous that I want to shake people who say/write it) then you are in a position of incredible influence. Using that influence for torpid punk rock pedagogery seems like such a waste. As Jello Biafra said "a hairstyle's not a lifestyle/ imagine Sid Vicious at thirty-five." Thanks for listening,

Aaron AuBuchon/ 3632 Louisiana Ave. / St. Louis, MO 63118/ video_nomad@hotmail.com

MRR,

This letter is in response to an incident at ABC No Rio here in New York City that will undoubtedly result in gossip and shit talking in the next few weeks. Yesterday Cripple Bastards were disallowed to play because of misogynous artwork, sexist lyrics, and a lack of respect for the people at ABC No Rio. Some of us in the ABC hardcore collective thought it would be a good idea to send out a statement about our side of what happened, which MRR readers are welcome to take or leave. The problem began when two NYC bands played with Cripple Bastards in Newtown, CT. Both bands had members who are ABC volunteers, and several of our friends from the NJ/NY area were at the show. After the show it was brought to our attention that the Cripple Bastards were selling a CD called "Almost Human," with an explicit cover image of a woman being forced at gunpoint to perform oral sex on a smiling man. A female friend of ours (who has been involved with ABC for years) approached them and asked very politely why they chose that particular image. At first they were reluctant to answer, choosing instead to make jokes to each other in Italian. Rather than explain the image, they insisted that she read their lyrics. While doing so, she came across a song called "Almost Woman/Feminist" which was a blatant anti-feminist song. When asked about this song, the singer for CB explained that things were different in the Italian scene, and then said that the rape picture on the cover of the CD was meant "to tell political people to stay away from [Cripple Bastards]." This veiled insult/ threat came amid a continuing string of comments in Italian that were clearly about our friend. The videotaping also continued until long after we were out in the parking lot.

On the ride home, we decided that we would hold an emergency collective meeting the next morning, when Cripple Bastards were booked to play at ABC No Rio. The situation was discussed with the volunteers at the show and it was agreed that Cripple Bastards were in violation of ABC's anti-sexism policy. For the volunteers who were fans of Cripple Bastards, this was an extremely hard decision. Although everyone involved regretted that the decision was so last-minute, we felt it was important not to compromise the values of the space in order to accommodate a group of people who clearly had no respect for those values.

When CB learned of the decision, they stormed up to the door yelling insults at the volunteers. After retreating to their van for awhile, they came back and we had a drawn-out argument about the situation, punctuated with outbursts of insults and videotaping from various members of the CB entourage. During this discussion, the band members and their American supporters failed to provide an explanation for the rape picture that satisfied the collective. Their primary argument was that a cultural/ language barrier prevented them from explaining. They also said it was meant to provoke "moralists" like ourselves (although we later learned that they only displayed the CD at certain shows, and didn't intend to put it out that day). A second collective meeting upheld the decision not to have them play. They left for their show in Philly that night. The other three bands on the show played great sets and things returned to normal.

If a band came to ABC No Rio with a swastika on their CD cover and said they couldn't explain it because of cultural differences, I doubt many people would be surprised if we turned them away. So why the shock when this happens because of a picture of a rape? Maybe for Cripple Bastards rape is a just a shocking idea that fits their nihilistic image. For women and men who have been raped it is something they live with every minute of their lives. If a band is going to use a graphic image of rape on a record, they should be prepared to explain why. When asked by a

woman to explain their artwork, Cripple Bastards chose to treat the situation like a joke and insult her. When they lost their chance to play ABC No Rio, they suddenly took it seriously, but still resorted to insults rather than logic. ABC No Rio decided that they weren't welcome in our space because it was intended as a safe space for women. My only regret is that we didn't realize this about them earlier and avoid so much ugliness. Thanks,
Jeff & the ABC No Rio hardcore collective

Hi,

We are a Colombian punk band, from Cali. We want to come to the US to play shows. We have all the paper work ready, like tourist visas. And we have made a name for ourselves in several cities in Colombia since we have started playing four years ago. Recently we recorded our third album and as soon as possible we'll send you our demo. We would really like to promote our album in the states. Can you offer any advice. Please respond, even if its a rejection a email.
Pablo (vocals) of 752-B/ ragde218@aol.com

MRR -

We The People of the United States of America (no matter what the latest proffered piece of preposterous political Pentagon propaganda proclaims) *can not* nuke—nor daisy cut—nor cluster bomb—nor—carpet bomb a path to peace, safety, justice, and prosperity for all of humankind. However: we can bomb a path through the rugged mountainous terrain of Afghanistan through which the Unocal Corporation can now build their infamous pipeline in order to insure that perpetually-polluting plundering petrochemical pirates will be able to rape and pillage the planet (including its inhabitants) for the foreseeable future. God Bless America!

The Crackhead Cowboy's inane and insane plan to justify the "intelligence" community's bloated boundless black budget billions by destabilizing nearly the entire world must be stopped dead in its tracks—*by any means necessary*.

The Cold War is over. However, the apparently acromonious anonymous authoritarian acronym agencies (who were so "intelligent" they failed to predict the fall of the Berlin Wall) have decided to maintain their American taxpayer-financed slush funds for the war industry by following right-wing reactionary foreign policy guru Samuel Huntington's advice in his blueprint for the Fourth Reich: "A Clash of Civilizations." Their plan is: to replace the public-distracting Cold War charade of Capitalism vs. Communism (China, anyone?) with "Judeo-Christianity" vs. Islam. It's just that simple, and just that medieval.

Now the pieces of the puzzle are coming together. The unelected military-industrial complex and their unelected pipeline-pimping Son-Of-A-Bush want us as willing slaves to their shrinking profit margin-induced eternal war against the infidels! So, when you get right down to it: Bush, Bin Laden—what the hell *is* the difference anyways? Shocked? You shouldn't be. (Read Jean-Charles Brisard and Guillaume Dasquie's enlightening expose "Bin Laden, the Forbidden Truth.")

Let's talk about George Bush Sr. for a second, shall we? King George The First is a terroristically-tainted tyrant himself, just ask the still-grieving family members of the 5,000 *human beings* who were slaughtered as they slept in their beds in 1989 in the U.S. satellite state of Panama, all supposedly so that Bush Sr. could arrest his insubordinate CIA underling—Manuel Noriega. Of course, the problem with that one in a long line of Bush lies was that Bush Sr.'s old CIA buddy Noriega was fraternizing with the top American military brass at the officer's club in Panama City *the night before the invasion*! Go figure. (It shouldn't take long.)

How many more *thousands of human beings* in Iraq (however non-American and non-Christian and non-white they may be) will be murdered by the maniacal Bush Mafia in their "effort to remove" Bush Sr.'s other former asset at the CIA: Saddam Hussein?

But wait: there's more! There's another "former" employee of Daddy Bush's CIA they haven't caught (or really wanted to catch) yet—Osama bin Laden! Yes, Osama bin Laden is yet another triumphant example of the Reagan-Bush era doctrine of publically pretending and professing to fight terrorism, while at the same time creating, training, and financing terrorist CIA proxy armies around the globe in such notably notorious killing fields as Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, etc.

And while we're at it, whatever happened to King George II's solemn vow to "get Osama bin Laden—*dead or alive*"? Isn't it interesting how the U.S. "free" corporate press has given Mr. Drunk Ass Bush Jr. a complete pass on that potentially catastrophic failure? But of course, the "free" corporate press has provided this willfully and gleefully incompetent ignoramous with a virtual free ride from the very day Mr. CIA Man Daddy Bush told Junior that he was going to be installed in the White House, so why should any of us be surprised now?

In addition: where have the al-Qa'ida "army" and their organizational leadership gone? To their graves? No. Clearly there's no convincing evidence of that implication that deviously deranged demented dinosaurs like "Defense" Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have been trying to foster ever since they began bombing the bloody hell out of the civilian population of Afghanistan on October 7th, 2001—killing well over 5,000 *human beings* (almost exclusively innocent civilians according to virtually all non-corporate American journalistic sources) .

Only in recent days have the liars at the Pentagon seen fit to admit what news organizations from the South Asia area have been reporting since Day One of the illegitimate Bush Administration's campaign to make Afghanistan safe for Unocal's pipeline project: the Taliban and al-Qa'ida forces in Afghanistan were not crushed as advertised. They simply relocated across the border into Pakistan—a nuclear power!

Now why would the criminal Bush Bandits boldly and bald-facedly lie to the American public about what happened over there in recent months, knowing (I assume) that they would be unable to hide the truth from us for very long? Could it possibly be because the "War on Terrorism" (much like the "War on Drugs" in Columbia) is in reality nothing more nor less than a diversionary tactic directing the gaze of the U.S. citizenry away from the true agenda of the Bush Mafia: *empire*.

The Oil Men got what they wanted out of Afghanistan: the Unocal Corporation's pipeline. Hell, the Bush Bandits even went as far as shamelessly installing a well-dressed (therefore well-respected by "our free press") former Unocal employee by the name of Hamid Karzai as "interim" leader of the new puppet regime in Kabul! Yet *no*

one in the "illustrious" editorial offices of the U.S. "free" corporate press thought that rather relevant "coincidence" was important enough to report to the public until months after the deed was done. (See a pattern?)

Now why would they attempt to hide all of this obviously important information from us? It couldn't be because most Americans are at heart good peace-loving people who believe in democracy and self-determination, who are opposed to imperialism, and who understand (when presented with the facts—not simply a steady diet of Pentagon propaganda from the "disbanded" Office of Strategic Information) that two plus two does indeed equal four?

(Sarcastic note: Thank God above (or below) for having foisted this frightenly fullblown fucking fascist fraudulent fundamentally-flawed fool upon the undeserving and unwilling people of our great nation and beautiful world. Amen.)

George Walker Texas Ranger Bush—having presided over the most egregiously incompetent "intelligence" failure in U.S. history, directly leading to the needless horrific deaths of thousands of innocent American civilians—has presented the American people and its consistently cowardly Congress with his solution to our present predicament.

Which is: the brain-damaged interloper in the White House (whom the prestigious German news magazine Der Spiegel in its May 28th issue reported Bush Jr. had asked the Brazilian President Fernando Enrique Cardozo the following question: "Do you have blacks in your country too"?) wants us to surender even more of our rapidly receding freedoms in the U.S. to the very same jackbooted jackasses in the CIA/ DIA/ NSA/ FBI "intelligence" racket who failed us (accidentally or purposefully) in the first place!

Maybe you don't remember, but the son of the former CIA director (after having hightailed it over "flyover land" on 9-11 in order to "avoid another hijacked plane from ramming Air Force One" *and* after having hid out on his ranch near Waco, Texas for the entire month of August, 2001 so that George Jr. could "take a much needed month long vacation" after a mere six months in office, during which according to the White House press corps Junior was actually already on vacation 40% of the time anyways) upon sneaking back into our nation's capitol, "our fearless leader" as his first point of televised public business went straight away to CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia to pat CIA Director George Tenet on the back for "the great job his organization was doing." Connect the dots, people. The truth behind the events of September l lth, 2001 are easy to see: *once you are willing to open your eyes.*

Yes, please do connect the dots--sooner rather than later, for all of our sake. And act. And *resist*, so that all of us may continue to exist. According to the conscientious objectors in the FBI's field offices in Minneapolis and Phoenix it is quite clear that the "intelligence" community had connected the dots well before the tragedy of 9-11 unfolded (*yet did nothing to prevent the attacks*). So, therefore, connecting the dots after-the-fact is the very least we can do as caring compassionate non-conservative citizens of this wonderful land. Our children, our grand-children, and our great-grand-children wouldn't have it any other way. Their future is *our* responsibility.

Jacob David/ P.O. Box 3050/ Eureka, California, USA 95502

Dear MRR -

Dave Dictor's column in MRR #229 (June 2002) was an inspiring and necessary critique of religion, the first two-thirds of which gave me much to agree with (I'm not sure I was convinced that the solution to superstition is more superstition—even a new, improved one—but I'll leave that for others to debate). His points were right on, and I hope to see more of this in the future.

However, I feel that I must point out that Mr. Dictor's column bears a... suspicious resemblance to another piece in another publication which hit the stands shortly before your own. The April 15, 2002 edition of Christopher Hitchens's column for The Nation (which can be accessed at http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20020415&s=hitchens) took a similarly grim view of the current state of the major world religions; Mr. Dictor's piece voiced many similar complaints (no problem with that) but did so in language that was alarmingly similar to that of the earlier article. To wit: "The state of America's religions are surely in disrepair as the Roman Catholic Church...has degenerated into a protection racket for wannabe celibate priest/child rapists." (Hitchens: "[Katha Politt] mentioned the obvious degeneration of the Roman Catholic Church into a protection racket for child rapists...") "The spirit of Judaism has been overtaken for the excuse of messianic colonialism..." (Hitchens: "She also instanced the way in which Judaism has become prostituted to the uses of messianic colonialism in Palestine.") "Then there is America's number one pastor, the good old Billy Graham, Protestant father-confessor to every President from Eisenhower to Clinton caught on tape with Richard Nixon spewing forth long dialogues of his hatred and mistrust of the 'Satanic Jews,' then offering Nixon his advise about what to do with them..." (Hitchens: ``What about Billy Graham, who has been Protestant father-confessor to every President from Eisenhower to Clinton, and who has achieved the status of America's mainstream cleric." Later: "H.R. Haldeman's diaries of the Watergate years, published in 1994, gave an account of a conversation between Nixon and Graham that included some heated talk about 'Satanic Jews,' and what to do about them. "Meanwhile the media feeds on the weird, beliefs to be found in the Koran as the government under the clueless evangelical idiot of an Attorney General plots how to destroy Al Qaeda, Iraq, Iran, the American Taliban, and the civil rights of the rest of us here." (Hitchens: "All official attention turns, meanwhile, upon the weird beliefs to be found in the Koran, which may be partly because the Attorney General himself is a tuneless, clueless evangelical Confederate dunce.") (An aside to Mr. Dictor: having lifted much of your paragraph from Mr. Hitchens, why suddenly start putting your own spin to his material? I am referring here to your addition of inverted commas to the word "weird" in Hitchens's sentence "the weird beliefs to be found in the Koran." Why the special concession to Islam? Why is the Koran less weird than the Book of Mormon? Why is it less weird for a Muslim to believe in a man in the sky than it is for a Jehovah's Witness? What makes Mullah Omar less weird than Jerry Falwell?)

At the school I teach at, this constitutes plagiarism. Mr. Dictor may well invoke the Stephen Ambrose/ George Harrison defense (it was unintentional, it was subconscious, it was the result of overwork) and we may well believe him. In any event, my complaint here is not so much against him per se but against the "Zine Coordinators"—I would suggest that you do less "coordi-

nating" and a bit more "proofreading" and "editing." Certainly, it would be impossible for you to detect every trace of, shall we say, "influence" in every MRR column, article or review. But, with all the progressive/ left/ etc. information that flows through MRR HQ, I find it hard to believe that such a clear echo of one of the most prominent writers of that sort (writing in one of the most prominent journals of that sort) could escape attention. Try to be more careful in the future.

Please don't misunderstand this as "allies fighting with allies" (I save most of my rancor for those who truly deserve it, I really do) or mere academic trainspotting (although I suppose I sort of outed myself as a pedant in the last paragraph). If MRR is serious about transforming itself into a source of news, ideas and criticism (in addition to stuff about music; please don't forget that the title of the 'zine is *Maximumrocknroll*), than it needs to maintain some sort of credibility. Mistakes like these are going to be exploited by people with very different political agendas than ourselves, who would like nothing more than to nag and nitpick the 'zine into an early grave. Aside from its use as a forum for political discussion (as well as a record guide), MRR has quite a bit of sentimental value to me, and I would hate to see that happen. Regards,
Handsome Dan/ Bowling Green, OH

Dan,

Thanks for the insight into the similarities between the two columns. We just got a third coordinator here (stoked) but let me assure you—they are busy. It is my opinion that Mr. Hitchins is not as universally read as you seem to think.I'm trying real hard to be nice, but I see coordinators up late and occasionally a little burnt and stressed, so when you suggest they "try to be more careful," I think you're talking down to them and clueless about what it takes to get this out every month. —Jeff M.

Dan,

The Nation, yes, "flows" through MRR HQ, though, as this situation indicates, I don't always read it as thoroughly as I might like. If you're inclined to rip people off, the number of sources is practically limitless, of course...regardless, I do take this situation seriously and will do my best to make sure it doesn't happen again. Thanks for the heads up. —Arwen

Dear MRR,

It seems so easy for people to get stuck in the past in this scene of ours. To glorify the "good old days", completely over looking the fact that things are totally awesome right now! There's been so much great stuff going on lately, so many rad house shows and awesome bands and zines and people working on projects like the Copy Cafe. It seems like people are just coming out from hiding and really coming together as a community.

I mean, c'mon, it wasn't that long ago when dancing at a show or showing any signs of enjoying yourself was completely out of the question. Thank god for bands like the Bananas making punk fun again. Every time they play at Gilman you just know that its gonna be amazing, everyone is into it and everyone is dancing. I think that's been missing at shows probably ever since Black Fork broke up.

I was on my way to the much hyped Bananas, This Bike is a Pipe Bomb show at Gilman the other week strolling along the bike path and trying to mentally prepare myself for the same show being at my house the next night.

I was almost at the club when I ran into a friend who convinced me to skip seeing Shotwell and go drink a beer instead (don't worry Gilman crew, we were more than two blocks away). On the way back to the show we ran into some more friends and went to hang out a few blocks away. A nice group, some older, some younger but we were all there, equal, it made me realize how unique our scene is in that there really is no generation gap. And it made me realize that we were all missing the show. So we headed back to the club just in time to catch the tail end of This Bike's set, and see the Bananas.

I was exited. Every time the Bananas play its perfect, it's our own special thing but tonight it just wasn't happening. I mean the band was great and people were dancing, but it was too rough. There were a few assholes who were ruining it for everyone. They seemed to be aiming for the people enjoying themselves the most, as if it was a crime. So I gave up trying to dance and stood grumpily in the corner until these two dicks fell onto the floor right at my feet. So I sat on top of them so that they couldn't get back up which made them really mad. One of them pulled me down, tearing the hood halfway off my sweat shirt and let me know that he was going to "fucking kill me." But the awesome thing about it was that I pissed them off so much that they actually left. Victory to the punks!!
Ben

MRR—

In your January issue you had an interview with Virus and they expressed a strong abhorrence at being labeled fashion punks. I would like to speak further on that. Punk is supposed to be DIY and an embracer of poverty. How is it either when you have people paying 300 dollars for Sid and Nancy collage jackets and 75 dollar exploited pants. Fuck that.

That is what I take the fashion punk label to mean. If you're buying because you want it and are not using the price as a status symbol, then yes, it's fine to pay that much if you can't find it cheaper. There are a lot of DIY alternatives to stereotyped punk fashion. Flea market field jackets in place of leather jackets. Red cat collars with buckles instead of the spike bracelets. It's time for some change. Experiment beyond normal stereotyped punk fashion. Wear stuff that borders on drag with punk clothes. Drag is a really effective statement against the norms of bourgeoisie respectability.

Also, www.interpunk.com is a poser store. Take a look at the bands on there. It's all into Fat Wreck, Epitaph, pop skate. There's also stuff by the bands NoFX, Sum 41, Dexter Holland drones name drop. MRR claims to support the underground but they publishing professional style ads by web sites offering nothing but poser music except for some old stuff, yeah there may be a good underground band or two but they have no credibility with their vehement support of Blink 182. Also their service sucks. Sincerely
Kyle Nonneman/ 2009 Stockton Street/ Springfield IL 627039

PS I will support your band—send me patches, etc. I'm also trying to start a pirate radio station playing underground punk, no emo, no ska. Skating and Satan go hand in hand, hoof and hoof.

Dept. of Corrections

In the record reviews in #230, the Strikers address was incorrect. The 7" is $3 ppd from Test Pattern Records/ PO Box 551/ Simsbury, CT 06070.

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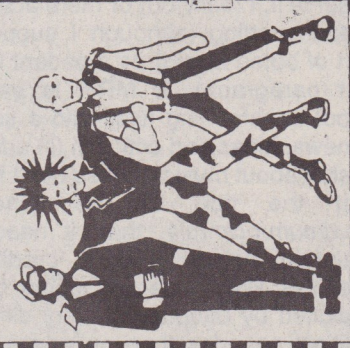

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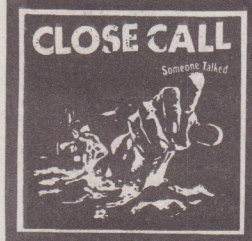

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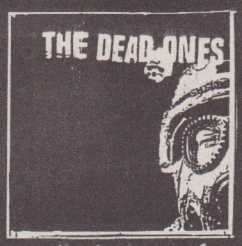

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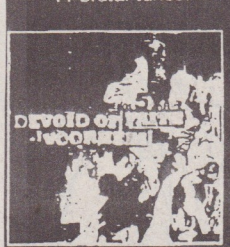

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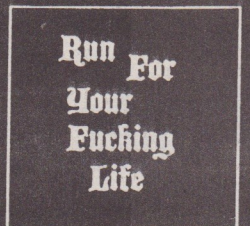

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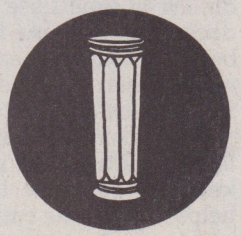


Other people's happiness makes me sick. Those idiotic smiles on those idiotic faces. I just want to smash my fist into them. How dare they be happy! What's there to laugh about? See how happy they are when I rip their balls off. See how happy they are when I stick my foot up their asses. —Kyle Rombad

[NOTE: As in last month's column. Most phrases originally uttered in Spanish will be translated and written in ***bold italic.***]

I sit here in the local greasy overpriced diner. My computer in front of me. My coffee on the right. My poached eggs and home greased on my left. Outside, the rain doesn't keep the tourists away from Lower Broadway. I suffer from a most severe case of EGLBM. Pronounced: Egg-el-bum, it means: Everybody's Getting Laid But Me.

Ah, New York in the spring. My best friend hates me. My bank account comes up red. The fleshpole rides a 10, while the action is on empty.

Before I take my AK-47 and pull a Trenchcoat Mafia, let me go back to Peru and the story up till now:

After a near-death California experience, I arrived in Lima. There, I move in with Gustavo, the punkrock King of Peru. He lives with his parents, four siblings, and every wayward traveler that's ever come through the city. His house is Central Station. His parents are The Hospitality Clan. His siblings are the guides. The family is dirt poor. They build their house around them as they gather enough money for bricks and mortar.

When I get there, Gustavo's family is already hosting people from every-which-where. Among them is an attractive GIRL and her somewhat less attractive BOYFRIEND.

On my first night, there's a punkshow. GIRL shows up without BOYFRIEND. She sits at my table, drinks my beer and moves ever-closer to some ROCKSTAR-looking guy with fishhook sideburns.

Heroes Innocente plays. They're the best band I've seen all year: snotty, punky, a singer with more charisma than a TV Evangelist. Somehow, I wind up in their truck after the show. Also in the truck are GIRL and ROCKSTAR.

We end up at the very suburban-looking house of the SINGER of the band. GIRL sits on the couch with the crashed-out drummer, bass player, guitar player and ROCKSTAR. I sit on another couch. SINGER plays Beatles records for all of us.

Sole, pronounced SO-LAY, is the unit of currency in Peru. One sole is worth about 30 cents. Throughout the trip, and the night, SINGER asks me for "one sole." I give it to him. It's like putting money in some kind of automatic recording device. Each time I insert a coin, a voice comes out asking for "one more sole."

Eventually, I go out with SINGER to see what my soles are buying. We stop for some pisco, the national drink. We also stop for cocaine, the national snort. Here's how the last column ended:

"You have one sole?" he asks.

"I told you, I have to get home." I tell him.

At the edge of my vision I see a hulking shape walking along the sidewalk across the street.

"I already said getting home is no problem..." he says. He looks up as the hulk starts crossing the street, coming toward us.

"This, however," he continues, ***"is a problem."***

****

[*I continue this month:*]

"Get up quickly," says SINGER.

We get up together. It's too late. The hulking figure now stands in front of us. His red and white polo shirt, barely covers a chest as big as a courthouse pillar and biceps as thick as my waist. I can see his dark crewcut hair and the scowl on his face.

"You just keep walking," SINGER whispers to me. ***"I'll talk to him."***

I walk ahead a few steps. As I pass HULK, he seems confused. He turns toward me. SINGER starts talking to him, drawing his attention away. As I walk, I catch the beginning of their conversation.

"What are you doing here?" asks HULK.

"Just going for a walk," answers SINGER. ***"Nice night isn't it?"***

"You weren't looking for drugs?" asks HULK.

"Drugs? What drugs? I don't know what you mean," answers SINGER.

I overhear the words *Norte Americano*. They're talking about me.

[Aside: South Americans use the words "Norte Americanos" when talking about Americans, people from the US. They don't use it for Mexicans or Canadians, both of whom are also North Americans. It pisses me off. I'm an American, get it? A plain ole ordinary American. There is no word: *United Statesian*. We take the last part of the country name... United States of AMERICA, and use it for our nationality. American. American. American. Is that so hard?]

By this time I'm out of range. All I can hear is murmurs and the gradually more-irritated voice of HULK.

Then, quick footsteps pitter patter behind me. Further back, heavier footsteps clomp clomp clomp at an even quicker pace. I glance back and see SINGER walking quickly towards me. He puts his hand on my shoulder and pushes.

"Run!" he says.

We take off toward his house.

The paradiddle of the tread behind me is turning into a flam.

We get to the front door just as the heaviest footsteps reach my heels. Inside, SINGER, slams the door shut and sits down on the couch. Safe! I take another seat. Everyone is right where I left 'em. Everyone, that is, except GIRL and ROCKSTAR. They're gone.

SINGER passes around the small envelope of white powder. While the crew engages in its nostril symphony, SINGER puts on the Beatles.

"Why don't we do it in the rowwwwoad?" comes the voice from the stereo.

Suddenly SINGER stops the record, holding a finger to his lips. The rest of the band snickers at the panting and moaning that come through the walls. I don't find it so funny.

Then, it hits me. I, too, have reason to snicker. From now

on, every time I see BOYFRIEND, I'll know something he doesn't. Every time I see those two together, I'll know he's been cuckolded, cheated. In a sense, I know GIRL more intimately than he does. It's not a large satisfaction, but it is SOME satisfaction.

The next few days, when I see GIRL and BOYFRIEND together, I find that inner sense of warmth that comes with knowing someone is more fucked-over than you are. It helps me breathe easier.

Now it's time to introduce Charlie. Charlie is from Chile. His Spanish is the toughest for me to understand. Even the Peruvians have a difficult time. They tell me that people from Chile "swallow their words." To me, it sounds as if he were a ventriloquist trying hard not to move his mouth, not to put his lips together as he speaks.

Despite the language, I like Charlie—at least at first. His face has a youthful softness, accented by the few whiskers sprouting from his chin. He's the tallest in this crew of low altitudes. But he doesn't use his height to lord. Instead, he walks with the heavy-headed slump of a scholar.

He's also the only one in our little commune who takes off his pants. We have four sharing the kingsize mattress on the floor. GIRL, BOYFRIEND, Charlie, and me. Gustavo's in the other bed, also with his pants on. None of us drop trou in front of the others... except Charlie.

It's my third night in Lima. As every night, the air is getting cold. Along with the wind, through the empty window frame comes the constant sound of barking dogs. As sun breaks, around 5AM, the sound changes to crowing cocks. It never ends, and I like it. It's as comforting as the horns and car alarms outside my window in New York.

Right now, I'm not sleeping. I'm engaged in conversation. [Aside: I've been in 40 countries, depending on how you count. One game played everywhere is ONE DOWNSMANSHIP. People the world over like to prove how poor they are... or how poor they were. Being from a poor country is a badge. It's status. A war medal. Somehow poverty is supposed to give a place integrity.]

I'm talking with BOYFRIEND. GIRL is off somewhere. (I bet I know... poor sucker.) Charlie is in the corner, making hand-dabbed anarchy patches.

"Is this the poorest country you've ever seen?" asks BOYFRIEND.

"Nope," I say, ***"Mongolia was much poorer."***

"Here," he says, ***"professors make $200 a month."***

My move. I see him and raise him 10. ***"In Mongolia,"*** I answer, ***"professors make $65 a month."***

He sees my raise and raises me 10. ***"Well, the minimum wage is only $125 a month."***

I see him and raise him another 10. ***"In Mongolia, there is no minimum wage."***

"Well," he says, ***"in Peru, it takes four or five hours just to go a few hundred kilometers, because the roads are so bad."***

"In Mongolia," I call, throwing down my straight flush, ***"there are no roads."***

[Aside: Another, more annoying, version of ONE DOWNSMANSHIP, is played by individuals. You don't have to be in a "poor" country to see it. You can witness it at any punk club or lefty get-together. You can even catch it among yuppies bragging about how far they've come.

Check out dumpster divers. If you see a punk rocker eating rolls out of a garbage bin, you know his parents must be rich. Poor people have too much pride to do that... and they don't have anything to prove. There's no surer sign of a wealthy background then a punk in the garbage.

I can imagine the game played by the REALLY rich who can't fake it as well as the dumpster divers.

"You know how poor my family was?.... We had THE SAME MAID for every room in the house."

"You think that's poor! Once a week my dad had to drive the Lamborghini BY HIMSELF. We just couldn't pay a driver for the seventh day."

"Wow! You really had it rough."

Yeah.

Let's get this straight. Poverty is a state... like death. It gives no privileges. It doesn't make someone honest or not. It's just there. Bragging about it makes as much sense as bragging about eye color. You're not good because you're poor. You're just poor.]

The next day, I'm hanging out with Charlie. I like him less as I see him play the poverty game. As Tio Rico, I offer to take him for a meal. We go to a local cafe and order Ceviche. For those unlucky enough not to have eaten Peruvian, Ceviche is a kind of spicy seafood stew. We enter one of the few local restaurants with a MasterCard sticker on the wall. We order a couple Ceviches and a couple Inca Colas. The waitress puts down a small plate of nuts for us to munch on until the food comes.

When she leaves, Charlie takes a napkin from the holder and flattens it on the table. Then he pours the nuts from the dish onto the napkin, folds the napkin, puts it in his pocket.

"Oi Señorita," he says. ***"Could we have some more nuts?"***

We return to Gustavo's in time for him to tell us about the show tonight. Metal punks and thrash punks. In a big outdoor space. Well, vamanos.

Scheduled starting time is eight o'clock. I get there at eight. Am I an idiot? Is this punk rock? Is this Peru? We have hours until the ACTUAL starting time.

I'm hungry, but I'm also tired of paying for Charlie. Gustavo, I don't mind. He's *really* poor. He's my host. He doesn't smoke my cigarettes. Doesn't drink my beer. I WANT to buy him things. He never asks me for anything.

"Look Charlie," I tell him. ***"Gustavo and I are going to get something to eat. We'll meet you here in an hour."***

Charlie nods, not looking at all offended.

"Sure," he says. ***"I'll be over at KIRKA, the anarchist record store. I need to sell some things."***

At the restaurant, Gustavo and I each order chicken cutlet with french fries. I order a beer. He takes an Inca Cola.

Before long, the waitress brings our orders. Along with the orders she brings tiny porcelain cups filled with catsup, mustard, and mayonnaise.

[Aside: What is it with mayonnaise? What's the appeal of that semen-like substance? People outside of New York put it on sandwiches, spoiling all kinds of meat. People in other countries put it on just about everything. The Dutch put it on french fries! It makes me gag.]

I pour the catsup on my fries. Gustavo takes the rest for his. I'm relieved to see the mayonnaise untouched. Spotting the empty dish, the waitress refills it from a large bottle of Heinz.

Charlie finds us as we're finishing. He pulls up a chair. Sits down at the head of the table.

"Can I borrow a spoon?" he says, reaching over my empty plate for my unused spoon.

"Spoon? For what?" I ask. There's nothing left on either plate. But I underestimate the boy.

I've forgotten about the catsup. There's a fresh bowlful still on the table. Charlie digs in. Scooping up the catsup in loathsome mouthfuls. Yum! Yum!

It's still an hour or so before the show. We're off to a local bar to stoke up. I, still Tio Rico, have a few dollars left on my credit card. Joining Gustavo, Charlie and me in the bar, are a few friends and hangers on. Among them is the incredibly appealing Carla.

I met her earlier in the evening. She's not beautiful in a classic way, but she's sexier than a shirtless Puerto Rican. Her eyes. Her laugh. The way she moves. Sexier than GIRL, who now rests in the back of my mind as a faint joy in

BOYFRIEND's cuckolditude.

Speaking of sexy, the waitress of this bar is sexy in EVERY classic way. A centerfold. A calendar. And she knows it. Wearing a black string halter top, she swaggers like every eye is on her. It is. Her molded jeans follow her legs into a perfect tuck, gliding into her gluteus, smoothing and creasing with every step.

I order a huge bottle of beer and glasses for everyone at the table. Carla speaks first.

"I don't like Norte Americanos," she says. ***"They want to rule the world."***

"I don't want to rule the world," I say. ***"I just want to get l... lessons in life."***

She smiles as if she knew what was really in my mind. I flirt back.

"Do you have a girlfriend?" she asks. Now that's a good sign.

"No," I say, ***"not at the moment."***

Charlie raises his hand. Is this school? You don't have to raise your hand to speak.

"You wanna say something?" I ask. ***"You don't have to raise your hand."***

"Girlfriend," says Charlie, holding his hand out, ***"I was just showing people your girlfriend."*** He makes a loose fist and jerks it back and forth in the air.

I redden as the rest of the table laughs.

After a few more beers, it's off to the show. I don't remember the bands, but I do remember drinking some more. It's 12:30 in the morning. There are five more bands to play.

Now, it's 3:00AM. I'm tired. The bands have finished. A few people still hang around and talk. I'm amused to see GIRL with BOYFRIEND, talking with ROCKSTAR. GIRL sits on BOYFRIEND's lap. ROCKSTAR stands a few feet away, his arms folded.

"Nya, nya," I think. "I know something you don't know."

It looks like the conversation is never going to end. I wonder if it's not a cocaine discussion... or maybe speed. Those last till dawn... two days later. I wanna go to bed.

I bug Gustavo and he agrees to leave with me. I wish the others farewell, and wink at ROCKSTAR. Don't worry. Your secret's safe with me.

The busses have stopped for the night. I pay for a taxi back to Gustavo's. It's only me on the mattress. The others haven't returned yet. BOYFRIEND, GIRL, Charlie, I wonder if they're walking. I doubt they have taxi money. Charlie, at least, won't admit it.

"It looks like the others will come even later," I say. ***"I just hope they make it."***

"I don't know what happened to Charlie," he says. ***"But GIRL and BOYFRIEND are with ROCKSTAR. They all went home together."***

He smiles, shrugs his shoulders, and gets into bed.

Charlie returns about nine o'clock the next morning. He's with Carla.

Me? I'm gonna become a Catholic priest. They know how to get the nook. I wonder if they're poor.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—> *You can't eat anything dept:* Before you go munching on that Silk Soy Drink or feelin' superior for slarfin' that Garden Burger, check with www.ithacanews.org/greenstar-stock.html. Most of those organo-veggie companies are owned by the same people who build bombers and have slave colonies in the Caribbean!

Take Nestles (Poland Springs Water) and Walmart (Silk Soy). You think you can get away from them that easy?

—>*Getting Print Inside dept:* David Gurz is a punkrocker in jail. You can and should write him. Send punk cassettes, sexy letters, etc to: David Gurz, EB1596, RD#10, Box 10, Greensburg PA 15601.

David sent me a copy of his zine, *Usual Suspect*. He also wrote about this project to get printed matter to those locked inside the American Gulag.

The project is BOOKS THROUGH BARS. They're at 4722 Baltimore Ave, Philadelphia PA 19143. Send 'em your old books or send 'em some money! They're doin' good stuff. Someday, when they publish YOUR book, you'll want such classy readers.

—>*Speaking of published dept:* I'm still waitin'. You can check the progress at Versus Press www.versuspress.com
My book of columns, called *I, A Me-ist* is due this year. Why not bug 'em about it.

—>*Speaking of bug dept:* Why not bug me with some nice porno? Considering my horned state, send me some vids of yourself... only the most intimate, (though legal!) please. Or email me those mpegs. My email address is above. Snailmail is: PO Box 137, Prince St. Station, New York NY 10012.

—>*I say keep 'em out of dentistry dept:* According to a recent email, White House officials have been meeting behind closed doors. They're working on an anti-terrorism bill that would keep some foreign students from studying "sensitive" academic subjects.

The meetings, directed by officials from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, are in response to the president's call for changes in US immigration law.

Georgie wants to make some academic areas off limits to "certain international students." He hasn't said which areas.

Foreign students make American universities possible. They're the only ones who pay full tuition, often with corporations footing the bill. Things could get really nasty if foreigners couldn't study what they wanted to. Even higher tuition for everybody else. Universities downsizing. Firing staff. Administrators taking shorter vacations. Oh the finances!

Of course, academia says it's all a problem of "academic freedom." Yeah right. Freedom enough to fold and put in your wallet.

—>*Vague warnings dept:* The government's plan to throw fear of terrorists in the face of Enron seems to be working. The Philadelphia city paper had the following story. I've condensed it a bit.

Neil Godfrey arrived at Philadelphia International Airport around 9:30 a.m. on Oct. 10. Godfrey was on his way to Phoenix, where his parents live.

When he stepped up to the ticket counter, the United clerk informed him he had been selected for a random baggage search.

As he passed through the metal detector, an airport security guard furrowed his brow at Godfrey's reading selections.

On the cover of the book, Hayduke Lives! by Edward Abbey, is an illustration of a man's hand holding several sticks of dynamite.

"For the first time, it occurred to me the book may be a problem," Godfrey recalls.

He proceeded through the security checkpoint and sat down to read near his boarding gate. About 10 minutes had passed when a National Guardsman approached Godfrey.

"He told me to step aside," Godfrey says. "Then he took my book and asked me why I was reading it."

Within minutes, Godfrey says, Philadelphia Police officers, Pennsylvania State Troopers and airport security officials joined the National Guardsman. About 10 to 12 people examined the novel for 45 minutes, scratching out notes the entire time. They also questioned Godfrey about the purpose of his trip to Phoenix.

Eventually, one of the law enforcement officials told Godfrey his book was "innocuous" and he would be allowed to board the plane.

Another 10 minutes passed while he sat in the waiting area.

A United employee came over and informed him that he wouldn't be allowed to fly, "for three reasons."

The first reason, she said, was that Godfrey was reading a book with an illustration of a bomb on the cover. Secondly, she said, he purchased his ticket on Sept. 11. (Godfrey bought the ticket on Priceline.com shortly after midnight, at least eight hours before the World Trade Center was attacked).

The final reason was that Godfrey's Arizona driver's license had expired. The employee pointed to a date to substantiate this allegation.

"No," Godfrey told her. "That's the day the license was issued."

The woman then pointed to another date on the card, Feb. 17, 2000, contending it was the expiration date. Godfrey countered that the date identified him as "under 21" until then.

"Too bad, it's too late," the flight attendant informed him.

Godfrey reclaimed his luggage and was escorted out of the airport.

When he got home, Godfrey did what a lot of guys do when they need consoling, he phoned his mom.

Godfrey's mother called United and attempted to straighten things out. A central reservation clerk assured her that her son was not banned from ever flying United again. She booked him on a different flight to Phoenix, this one departing Philadelphia at 3:04 p.m. that same afternoon.

Godfrey scurried back to the airport, leaving the Abbey novel at home. He exchanged it for a seemingly benign novel, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban.

When Godfrey arrived at the airport around 1:15 p.m., his luggage was again searched. But as Godfrey passed through the metal detector, a police officer recognized him from the commotion just a few hours earlier. The cop pulled Godfrey aside and made a few phone calls. Ultimately, he declared that everything checked out fine. But a National Guardsman standing nearby vetoed that decision.

"This time, they took my Harry Potter book and about four people studied it for 20 minutes," Godfrey says.

Finally, at about 1:45 pm, officials apparently felt reassured that Godfrey was not a security threat. They told Godfrey he would be permitted on the plane, but that he couldn't pass through security until 2:30 pm.

At the appointed time, an escort took Godfrey through security, while at least 15 law enforcement officials looked on. Rather than taking Godfrey directly to his gate, however, he was ushered into a private interrogation room.

"They patted me down and found nothing," Godfrey says. But when he emerged from this room, Burt Zastera, supervisor of airport operations for United, told him he would not be allowed to fly.

Scarier than any Osama threats, huh?

This month I would like to talk about some of the specifics involved with mailorder record distribution and record trading, and of course hardcore music!

First off, some really good books and films about punk have been coming out. I've discussed in this column before about how punk and hardcore are starting to gain some cultural legitimacy. The same rock critics and music business types who once sneered at punk now consider the Clash and the Ramones to be some of the greatest rock bands ever. Those cultural elite types can take a long walk of a short pier for all I care. I thought the Clash was great the first time I heard them—I didn't need 20 years of subsequent music history to prove me right and I could give a fuck if *Spin* or *Rolling Stone* think the Ramones are worthy of inclusion in the rock and roll hall of fame. My only fear is that in the coming years these same jokers will start to mythologize bands like Minor Threat, Bad Brains, and the Big Boys in the same fashion. Where were these guys when hardcore started? Listening to U2, REM, and the Smiths, that's where. Don't let our history and culture be hijacked by a bunch of know-nothing rock critics and cultural studies writers who sat on the sidelines during the golden age of hardcore punk rock. Remember this, when punk and hardcore started, most of the rock press put it down, *Rolling Stone*, *Circus*, etc. ignored and denigrated punk in favor of crap like Springsteen and Tom Petty. Only *Creem* and maybe *Trouser Press* gave punk any respect and *Spin* and MTV didn't even exist yet. Now those guys are talking up the Ramones and Clash—fuck 'em. And bring back *Creem*! Boy Howdy!

That said, check out the documentary film *Westway to the World*, about the Clash, directed by Don Letts. If you like the Clash, I also recommend the book *Last Gang In Town* by Marcus Gray. For collectors there is a good discography book, *Clash Retrospective*. Another film I would highly recommend is *Dog Town and Z-Boys* which tells the story of the early days of modern skateboarding in SoCal in the mid 70s. I was never much of a skater myself, but this film made the connection between punk and skating crystal clear even though punk is barely mentioned. It's all about the rebellious attitude and high energy. Also check out Brenden Mullen's two books, *We Got the Neutron Bomb* and *Lexicon Devil* about the early days of LA punk and the Germs. OK now that the professor has given out the summer reading list, let's get to the meat of today's lecture.

Record trading and mailorder rip offs! Actually in 14 years of doing mailorder distro and many more of ordering records I've been ripped off maliciously only a very few times. I think the vast, vast majority of supposed rip offs are what we would call "failures to communicate." In my experience, the best way to keep from having your mailorder or trade from getting fucked up is to provide as much information as possible. Write legibly and make sure you list all the records you want, quantities and titles, and put your address on everything. You would be surprised how many orders come in to distros and labels with cryptic as fuck messages like "Here's 10 bucks, send me both" or "Send me the Black Flag one." OK, was that a record or a CD? Maybe a shirt? And where do you want it sent, as there is no address on the envelope? List alternates in case something is out of stock, include your email address, anything to demystify and idiot-proof your order. You can never provide too much information. In my experience the orders that are the most confusing and difficult are the ones that get dealt with last. When you have a big pile of mail in front of you and the post office closes in two hours, the first letter to get set aside to deal with later is the one that's illegibly written, has no return address, and doesn't specify whether they wanted an LP or CD version of the release they ordered and is a buck short. Read the fine print in a distros ads and make double sure you got the postage right if the items are not post paid. The number one thing that will slow down your order is not the distro ripping you off, it's the customer not taking the time to prepare the order right in the first place. If something does go wrong, like you get a different record than your ordered, or your order doesn't show up, contact the distro and once again, give them as much information as possible. A letter like "dude, I never got the stuff I ordered from you" isn't going to get you very far. Provide your name, address, what you ordered, how you paid for it (cash, money order, credit card, etc.), and what the problem was. Most distros are happy to straighten things like this out quickly as their reputation, and

having you as a future customer, are on the line. Don't assume you are being ripped off—assume there was a mistake, like the order was addressed wrong, or the person filling the order misunderstood what you wanted, or the post office returned it because the stamps fell off. Keep in mind that the most economical way to ship records is the Media Mail (formerly Book Rate) rate. This is very slow, especially for large packages, but it keeps the price of shipping your records down. If you order records, unless Priority/First Class is specified, assume it's going media mail and will take up to a month. In today's internet driven, instant gratification society a lot of people expect their records to show up the day after they click their mouse. Most DIY labels aren't able to provide that sort of overnight service that corporate retailers do, and if they did you would be paying more in shipping and handling than the records you've ordered cost.

The cheapest way to get records around at a decent price is through trading, especially for foreign records. Most small labels and distros do a lot of trading and I've written about this here before. All the time I hear stories from distros and labels about how they got ripped off by another label or distro. Often I know both of the parties involved and I always have to wonder. Once again, most of these "rip offs" are failures to communicate and misunderstandings. I do a ton of trading with labels all over the world. I frequently fuck up and delete emails, or forget to send records, etc. The most confusing is when dozens of emails are exchanged over a single trade to the point where you forget what you were originally trading. Once again, provide as much information as possible. Band name, title of the record, quantity, address, etc. Don't assume the person you are emailing remembers which Unholy Grave split 7" you are talking about and where you wanted it sent. Another very important thing for foreigners is to specify any special instructions you might have to get your stuff through customs. Be specific about how you want the forms filled out (gift or merchandise, value of records) every country is different, don't assume the label knows how to treat your package. And once again, don't assume the person is ripping you off. Chances are the more accusatory you become, the less enthusiastic they are going to be about straightening out your problem. I honestly assume most people wouldn't last too long in DIY hardcore being dishonest or ripping other people off in a malicious fashion. There are a few exceptions, such as Oliver Simonpietri, formerly of Sludge Records, now using the name Acrude Records. This guy is a total swindler and has ripped off dozens of bands and labels. The fact that he keeps having to change the name of his label and use aliases like Michel and Barbara should be a clue to his dishonest double dealings.

One genuine way to get ripped off if you run a label or distro is credit card fraud. If you do a mailorder over the internet and accept credit cards be sure to look into getting fraud verification software to screen for stolen credit cards. I've talked to a lot of other distros and labels about this. Most of the fraudulent orders come from Indonesia, Malaysia, Yugoslavia, and Russia. Note also, that Indonesian scam artists will try to use Australian or Dutch addresses as well. Most fraud verification software rejects any credit card orders from these areas. If you are a legit mailorder customer from one of these places, save your time and send cash or a money order. No one trusts orders from these places anymore, so don't be frustrated when your favorite distro rejects your order. Our fraud verification software rejects several bogus Indonesian orders everyday, give it up, kids!

Mykel Board wrote years ago about going to a flea market in Mexico and seeing all the latest US punk records for sale at dirt cheap prices. How could this be? There was a cottage industry of kids writing to US labels telling them they were poor Mexican punks who really, really wanted the new Queers album or whatever and the GG's (guilty gringos) would send it to them. This sort of racket still goes on, I get "something for nothing" letters from spam artists all the time. OK, if you have the time, money and records to spare and you want to send these kids your stuff, go for it. I can ill afford to give stuff away, especially when the writer is obviously sending out a spam email to hundreds of labels asking for "free stuff." If you are going to try to scam labels out of free records at least start a zine or get a college radio show!

Postage is a fucking raped ass! The Post Office is using anthrax as an excuse to jack the postal rates again. The international rates went through the roof last time and I think we are going to have to prepare to pay higher prices for records, especially foreign stuff, as shipping costs continue to escalate. I have a few recommendations to make when shipping overseas. One is the Global Priority Flat Rate envelope. You can sandwich 20 7"s between two pieces of cardboard and stuff them into one of these. This is a pretty cheap way to send 7"s air mail in multiples of 20. Also there is the M-Bag rate. This is a special rate for periodicals and books, but most postal workers can be bamboozled into letting you ship records and CDs this rate as well as it roughly corresponds to the domestic Media Mail rate. There are some extra forms to fill out, but it is way cheaper than normal Parcel Post and Letter Post rates. A word to the wise, pack the shit up good as it will get hammered!

Wow, that was pretty boring huh? Let's talk about Dutch Thrash, which is On the Rise. Conveniently that's the title of a great new comp 7" that features a slew of the new wave of Dutch thrash. But let's turn the clock back a few years to the golden age of hardcore. Holland had this raging scene in the 80s that I've written about in this space before. Pandemonium, BGK, Lärm, No Pigs, Mornington Crescent, Gepopel, Indirekt, Wulpse Varkens, Z'miv, Neuroot, Jesus and the Gospelfuckers, Agent Orange, and a little later, Seein' Red and Man Lifting Banner. Fucking raging bands, fast and raw as fuck. Holland's output of high quality hardcore is up there with Finland and Sweden, just not quite as well known. Holland underwent a big "youth crew revival" in the 90s which was roughly contemporary to the "youth crew revival" in America that seemed to center around bands like Floorpunch and Ten Yard Fight. Sorry to say, I dozed right through that revival. Let me know if I missed anything crucial, OK.

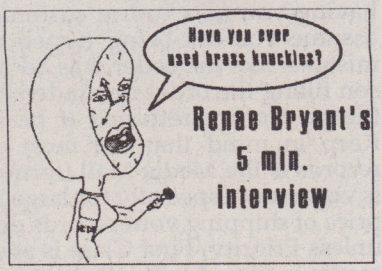
But now Dutch thrash is putting Holland back on the map! Almost all of these bands are doing 7"s and splits. Which I think is cool, because you will be able to check out a lot of bands for less money and short, fast, thrash is better on a 7"! Seein' Red have been playing fast, intense hardcore in Holland for longer than most of you have been punk—these guys are super dedicated. I was honored to do a show for them in Minneapolis a few years back. They have done dozens of records over the years, including a lot of splits with bands I'm not too crazy about, but like all those Crudos splits, at least one side rages! After Seein' Red, I think the first of the new Dutch Thrash bands would be Boycot who combined political crust core with fast thrash and a little of the classic Lärm/ Pandemonium/ Seein' Red/ Ma Lifting Banner Dutch *speed* and set the tone for a bunch of bands to follow. They also did a split with Betercore (Betercore's later material is much better) which sort of focused on punk/sXe hardcore kid unity. This seems like a no brainer now, but remember in the mid 90s things could have gone a lot differently and the idea of crust/punk kids and sXe/hardcore kids all uniting around fast DIY hardcore was actually a little

ahead of its time. And a damn good idea that was too. Boycot have done a ton of split 7"s, a 10" and a US tour.

How about some comps? First off there's the *Sturm Und Drang* LP with Point of Few, Betercore, SoberResponse and Office Killer. Actually I thought Office Killer was more of a screamo/emo violence band, but the other three bands are total ragers! Then there is *Neder Thrash in Opkomst* 7" with Mihoen, No-Men, Cockroach, Betercore, Tuco Ramirez, SAF and Seein' Red. All these songs are in Dutch too! Most Dutch bands (well most bands period) sing in English these days, but in Holland English is so widely spoken that there is sort of a "save the Dutch" movement, so singing in Dutch is a political statement against globalization in itself. Now what the fuck are they saying?

My personal favorite is Point of Few. I've heard these guys broke up, which sucks if it's true. But they will long be remembered by their vinyl output. First there is the *Beneath the Surface* EP on Coalition which is good, but even better is the *Silence* EP on 625. Not sure where this one fits in but there is a s/t 7" on Goat Head records that has a totally emo looking cover but is top notch thrash nonetheless. But if you ask me, the absolute best of the current Dutch Thrash records has to be the Point of Few/Betercore split 7" on Balowski Records. This is a non-stop burly-as-fuck thrasher that will start a pit in any living room! Second only to this is the Point of Few split 7" with Mihoen on Kick and Punch. Again both bands are off the hook with top-notch, top-speed thrash power. Speaking of Mihoen (what the fuck does this name mean?) they also did a critical split 7" with Cockroach. What kind of music does Cockroach play? Why raging, hyper fast Dutch thrash, what did you expect? Like the POF/Mihoen split, this has a very DIY screenprinted cover with a DIY manifesto contained within. Great to see bands doing it themselves, *and* explaining their political motivations for doing so. I guess this was originally released a few years ago, but the screenprinted cover is a reissue on Balowski. Vitamin X, OK, I got a soft spot for these guys mix of sXe youth crew and fast thrash. They did 2 7" on Commitment which were more youth crew, a 7" on Havoc which I must modestly say is totally awesome and then two LPs, one on Underestimated and another split release of Underestimated and Havoc. Olho De Gato are another raging Dutch thrash band who, I believe, have no Dutch members, Holland being a very cosmopolitan sort of place. Olho De Gato have a split 7" with our friends we met above Betercore. Now on this release we have Billy from Boycot added on vocals in Betercore which means that the vocalists in this band are BILL AND TED! Most Excellent! Just as you would expect, this is more hyper fast, raw, hardcore punk with sick breakdowns and thrash, thrash, thrash. OK, so you track down the records I talked about above right. You patiently make a 90 min tape of all your favorites. What do you get? The ultimate Friday night Dutch thrash living room mosh tape!

OK, sit down, I' m not through yet. In my opinion two of the most under appreciated hardcore bands ever are Finland's Sairaat Mielaat and Holland's Jesus and the Gospelfuckers. I think I've written about both bands in this column before. It looks like both bands will finally be treated to vinyl reissues, Passing Bells will be doing a Sairaat Mielaat LP and Kangaroo will be doing a record of Jesus and the Gospelfuckers. If you love hardcore like I love hardcore, pick up both of these the minute they hit the streets—both killer bands gone totally overlooked and underappreciated. It blows my mind how third rate stuff like Slapshot sells tens of thousands of copies and every college kid has their T shirt when the best hardcore languishes in obscurity, Henk, hurry up with that stuff man!



It all started at Lisa X's house sitting there discussing the possibilities of a new magazine she was going to publish. In the background the second episode of *Survivor* loomed (Lisa X's favorite show).

"You gotta go on *Survivor* for me," asserted Lisa X.

"No, no," I responded, "not *Survivor*, but I've been thinking about *Fear Factor*. If you want me to apply you have to print me out an application from fearfactor.com."

The next time I saw Lisa X she had the application, all sixteen pages in hand.

"Here it is, it's due by the 31st of March so you better hurry up," commanded Lisa X.

"I'm on it," I replied. So all I had to do was make a five minute video tape explaining why I would be an excellent candidate for *Fear Factor,* complete the application, and include one recent personal photo of myself. No problem. I could get all that done in seven days. First to be conquered…the application. Hmmm. "Craziest thing you've ever done?" Hmmm. "Your greatest accomplishment?" Hmmm. "Is there anything you wouldn't do for money?" Hmmm. "If you had three wishes…?" Hmmm. "Describe your perfect day…" Hmmm. "How would your best friend describe you?" Hmmm. So many fucking questions. So many fucking answers. Best answer: "When I was a dominatrix, I once sewed a man's penis to his stomach (a requested action)."

The next day I went to school, where I teach. "OK," I announced to the teachers, "who is going on *Fear Factor* with me? They can make a whole show of male versus female teachers. I just know they'll put us on. Come on. Do it! Think of how amazing it would be. $50,000! Come on. You know you want to do it!" I must have asked ten different young, athletic teachers. It came down to two other female teachers who felt as though they were up for the challenge and the 50 grand. "OK, go to fearfactor.com, get your application, make your video this weekend and be ready to send it off on Monday."

"OK, we're on it," they chimed.

Next, the video… Hmmm. Where could I film my video? Hmmm. Aha… THE DUNGEON! So out to Lady Laura's Dominion I traveled. I opted for the tattooed punk rock pin-up girl look I regularly sport versus the innocent teacher, mean dominatrix, or sporty spice look I could have chosen. OOO, choose me, I'm so crazy…whatever. Video done.

Now to find a photo… I really like the photo from October of me at the Sick of It All/Dropkick Murphy's show…the one I cut my ex-boyfriend out of—that one will do. Now all I have to do is send it off.

Monday arrived. "Did you do your video?" I asked Miss Doyle, the fourth grade teacher.

"No, I've chickened out. I can't eat all that shit they make you eat," she decided.

"Whatever!" I replied, disappointed.

"Did you do your video?" I asked Miss Thomson, fifth-grade teacher.

"No, I can't do it. I'm sorry," she said.

"Well, fuck me. I guess I'm flying solo," I asserted while the *Rocky* theme played in my head.

The package was sent out. Now it's all about waiting. I told the students how important their writing skills were before they started their new "adventures in writing."

"I know that you think Ms. Bryant is really boring, but I actually write for a couple of magazines. I've had some amazing adventures and met some really amazing people as

a result of my writing abilities. I will actually be writing for a new magazine. My columns will be about adventure. My first adventure is applying to be on *Fear Factor.* Cross you fingers that I get on," I said.

"Cool, Ms. Bryant, they'll choose you for sure!" they cheered.

"Now back to the lesson," I state trying not to be like one of those teachers who waste curricular time telling stories, like half of my high school teachers. Soon word spread like wild fire.

"Ms. Bryant, Ms. Bryant, when are you going to be on *Fear Factor*?" ten different students asked me the next day.

"They have to choose me first," I inform them "it's like a job, you have to apply and be chosen."

"They'll choose you for sure, Ms. Bryant," they said with all their childhood enthusiasm.

"I hope so!" I replied starting to sound like the mom from *Requiem for a Dream.*

Then I almost forgot about it all. I was at open house. A parent I didn't even know came up to me. "I hear you're going to be on *Fear Factor*!"

Oh, my. Now every day somebody asks me about it. I did it to myself. I know this. So now I wait. Luckily, I have so much going on that waiting is the easy part, not Requiem-like at all.

Fear Factor called on Wednesday. "Hi, may I speak to Renae Bryant?"

"Speaking," I said.

"This is Scott, casting director of *Fear Factor,*" said the voice.

"Oh, my," I said.

"Can you hold?" asked Scott.

"Sure," I replied. I held for at least five minutes.

"Hi, are you still there?" asked Scott.

"Still here," I said.

"Wow, you're great, you're not even complaining. I'm going to write that on your application right now," stated Scott, "We watched your video and we want you to come out and interview for the show. What time do you what to interview on Sunday [Mother's Day]?"

"How about 3pm?" I asked.

"You're scheduled. Is there another number where we can reach you?" Scott asked.

"That's it," I replied,"I'm off-track from teaching right now."

"Wow, you look like a rock star, not a teacher. Do your students know you have all those tattoos?" Scott asked one of the second-most asked questions about my tattoos.

"No, not really, they catch a glimpse every once in awhile. I always wear sleves, so they normally do not see them," I said.

"What does that one on your arm say...'disco'?" asked Scott.

"No, 'discipline,'" I inform him.

"Oh, that's better," Scott informed me, "Are those dragons going around your waist?"

"Yes," I stated.

"Cool, we'll see you on Sunday...and bring another picture of yourself," directed Scott.

"OK!" I said.MOTHER'S DAY:

So, I got up early and took my mom to a Mother's Day breakfast. When I first told her I applied for *Fear Factor* she was not pleased. She was less pleased when I had her watch an episode of it. When I called her to let her know that I was chosen to interview she was not happy. Then something happened. I got the "call back." My mom told the secretary she worked with. She was very excited. Then she went online. All of her online pals were excited about me possibly being on the show. More excitement. Now my mother is more excited about me possibly being on the show than I am.

I left for the NBC studios in Burbank at 1:30pm, with all the Mother's Day traffic, I arrived at exactly 3pm. I walked into the portable.

"Sign here," directed the young man, "next we'll take some photos of you."

With the photos taken a young lady took me into a tiny room. I could clearly hear the interview next door going on. The girl being interviewed was one of those you hope loses and can't wait until she makes a complete ass of herself. She even broke into a Tori Amos song. OK. The interview girl was not impressed. Next she video tapped my body, front and back. After this she had me sit down and asked me a series of questions. The same questions I had answered on my application, with a few variations: "Tell us what your tattoos mean," "Tell us why your voice is hoarse," "How do you think the audience will react to you?" "On a scale of one to ten how outgoing would you say you are?" "What do you think your percentage is of actually winning?" "OK, you have ten seconds tell the producers why they should choose you."

"Blagh, blagh, fucking blagh blagh." I enthusiastically responded to each question.

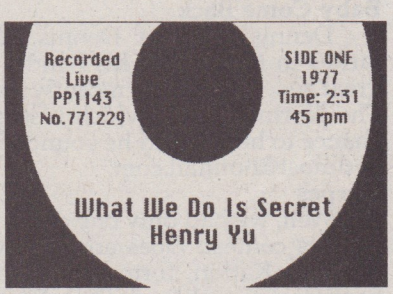
"OK, if the producers choose you, you will receive a call in two months. Unfortunately, if they do not choose you, you will not receive any call," she graciously informed me.

I shook hands and said thank you. They seemed most excited about my tattoos. If I am chosen it will be do to the "tattooed teacher/punk rock singer" effect. So, now I wait.

Saturday we (AONHC) played a show with Kirsten's (Naked Aggression) new band Meet the Virus. They are *awesome.* Those of you that loved Naked Aggression will really appreciate Kirsten's new band. Flatus (NJ) played. I didn't get to see them because our recording ran late. Ted won me over with his East Coast accent. He told me I should do a five minute interview with him. I told him he should do a guest column. He gave me a thousand excuses why he couldn't. I told him "where there is a will there is a way." An hour later he told me that he had a good idea for a guest column, "I Fucked a *MaximumRocknRoll* Columnist." I thought it was a great idea, kind of like Aaron Probe's girl reviews—only I am not currently available, he'll have to check back with me, or try one of the other five female columnists. I think I have a new friend in Jersey though, so that rules. Check them out when they come to your town. Justified Anger also played their fast and furious brand of punk rock.

No featured activist again. I need to get on top of that. Anyway, by the time you read this I will have, hopefully, passed my comprehensive exams at UCR and graduated with my MA degree. All that translates into Renae becoming a normal functioning member of society again. I can hardly wait. My site hase been down because OC Web sucks. I am currently changing web hosts so I apologize to anyone who has emailed me or tried to bring up the site. Once it's back up it will still be webmistress@ontherag.net / www.ontherag.net. You are always welcome to write me at PO Box 251, Norco, CA 92860-0251.

Blammo



A mysterioso collector guy sends a motherlode of releases to my doorstep of the 7 inch variety. They reek of obsessiveness. Take the reissue of the PLUGZ' *Mindless Contentment* EP originally released on Slash, for example. It wasn't enough to do a pressing with a repro of the standard stock sleeve, which he did do, but

Mr. Blammo also has done an orange vinyl pressing, numbered of 200 with a repro of the ever elusive "necktie" sleeve. For those of you who have never seen, the "necktie" sleeve was a promo-only bugger whose light of day has been very rarely seen. Most of us scum first saw glimpse on eBay a couple of years ago when a posted copy went for a half grand. One, perhaps two have surfaced since then, with no more than 20 estimated in existence. Blammo is a co-label with Kablooey and Kaplow, which released the TAPEWORM and BOBBY SOXX reissues late last year/earlier this year. Also word has it that the FEAR boot of several years ago that had both of their 45s melded into one was part of the same umbrella. In fact, Blammo plans to do another pressing of that on colored vinyl to be released later this year. But the crown jewel of this string of (re)releases is THE EAT's *God Punishes* EP. Its reproduction values are stunning, replete with paste on cover, and lots of inserts, gig flyers, etc that was found in the original release. Even the original baseball card that was found in the orig was redone as a hockey card in this reproduction. Finally, a special pressing of this was done which is numbered out of 100 that includes a bonus 7" containing tracks that were originally recorded during the Scattered Wahoo Action cassette sessions but inexplicably left off.

Punk Rock Aerobics

While all too many of my female punk or ex-punk friends claim to have independently invented the seemingly absurdist concept of Punk Rock Aerobics ("I used ta do jumping jacks to the Ramones …"), while in NYC, I managed to catch the real thing being practiced as an organized group activity. Two Beantown gals, both with indie cred (Hilken a member of the band Fuzzy, and Maura a sometime album cover artist) have put together something that transcends initial giggling into a real bonified workout. With its first class held at the venerable CBGB's, a few friends and I decided to don our torn spandex and check it out. After paying our $7 to the girls' mothers at the door, we joined about 20 people who looked more serious into exercise than the occasional pogo. Hilken, a licensed aerobics instructor, led the charge with (s)punky vigor. After warming up with some stretching exercises to the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES' *Part Time Punks*, heavier sounds accompanied some sweat-breaking activity. EATER, REAL KIDS ("Do The Boob" while working on the pectorals), and the RAMONES ("Beat on the Brat" as you punched into the air) laid the soundtrack. Bricks were later brought out for use as three pound weights, followed by stomach crunches as done to "Search and Destroy." We warmed down to MY BLOODY VALENTINE and KRAFTWERK'S *Autobahn*. Mike Watt (MINUTEMEN) was listed as the DJ, but all he did was lean against the wall and smoke! See the PRA website (www.punkrockaerobics.com) for upcoming classes. Funnily, the day after I saw my mug in the *NY Times* photo of said event. I'm the one with the Billy Idol sneer…

Baby Come Back

Dennis Most of Dennis Most and the Instigators writes in to say that his band's mini-tour of Italy was a great success. He has recently recorded a CD called "Not The Normal Kind" which is in pre-release form. I had a chance to hear it and he sounds in fine form. Contact him at dmost@hotmail.com.

Herpes

Well, we had only one entry for the Guess My Herpes Results contest. Does anyone ever read this column? A Mr. Ken Katkin, former honcho of Homestead Records post-Cosloy and Trash Flow Records and now a Professor of Law and eternal well-wisher and optimist, guessed that I was negative. Unfortunately, he was incorrect.

NetPunk

with Mark Hanford

Some months this column writes itself and others I have to struggle to find enough worthwhile sites to even get started. You can probably tell the difference, but I'm going to let you read this sucker and you can decide for yourself if it was one of those months or not.

I'm not sure if I've mentioned the Book of Zines before, but this site, at http://www. zinebook. com/ , deserves mentioning every other month. It is *the* resource for both the reader and publisher of zines and e-zines. This is a giant directory of zine related information, including where to find back issues online, addresses where you can donate your zine collection, legal issues and resources for zine publishers, links to how-to pages on everything from distribution to zine tips and tricks. Basically, if you are into zines, this site has it all. Don't miss it.

Speaking of directories, the Punk Information Directory (http://www.punk-information.com/) has a slew of label and band listings, including the releases that the bands have put out. It is not, however, a complete listing, but instead is what the webmaster knows about. As such, there are some inaccuracies, but this is still pretty cool. He also has a music and concert review section.

Not being a regular reader of *Punk Planet*, I lost contact with what Bob Conrad has been up to for the last five years or so (ever since he left the punk-list) and I just happened across the website for *Second Guess*, his long running Reno-based zine. This site is less about the zine and more a Bob archive. He has a smattering of (somewhat) lengthy articles he's written for different things, as well as a great section of band photos from *The Third Chord*, the book of photos he put out. Pay it a visit at http://www.secondguess.net/ .

You'll also find a lot of cool photos, flyers, and more at TCPunk (http://www.tcpunk.com/) which covers the Minneapolis/Saint Paul punk scene. There's a Minnesota Punk discography, Felix Von Havoc's flyer archive, a band list, a huge message board area, and more. Plus, it is clean and easy to look at. What more could you ask for?

You'll find a nice article on Dez of Black Flag, Willie of Los Illegals, and Tito of the Plugz online from an issue of *Frontera Magazine*, which focuses on Latinos. The article is about their participation in the LA punk scene and what they are doing now. It is a pretty interesting, though short, read. Check it at http://www.fronteramag.com /issue5/Punk/ .

I could do without all of the pink, but GirlPunk.Net (http://www.girlpunk.net/) has way rocking photos of punk bands with girls, plus mp3s, reviews, articles, interviews, and message boards, all from a punk girl perspective. Lots and lots of stuff to read and look at here.

An another cool site for women is She-Net: Women of Independent Minds at http://www.she-net.com/ . This site is mainly a forum whose focus is to provide a "women-supportive environment" that is "pro-diversity," "sex-positive," and "community-driven." You'll find thought-provoking articles and an opportunity to network with other women who may be a lot like you. Oh, and men are welcome, so long as they abide by the rules.

Another sex-positive site, run by a women, is NakedPoetry.com, and e-zine that includes Sex Toy advice, (mostly) erotic poetry, a bit of prose, and some weird interviews. You probably don't want to get caught looking at this at work or in the school library, but if you get a chance, visit http://www.nakedpoetry.com/ .

Another pretty interesting and weird place on the net

is *Found Magazine* (http://www.foundmagazine.com/). *Found Magazine* is a paper and e-zine of notes, photos, letters, etc that people find on the street, etc. Some of those scraps of paper that are blowing around your town have some pretty weird things on them. Believe me... or don't... check them out for yourself.

The weather around here has been pretty damn nice, and so I've been working on my Vespa, getting it ready for the season (actually, here in California I can ride it year-round, but I don't like riding it after dark because the electronics on it suck, so I have to wait awhile. Anyway, some punk rockers do actually ride scooters (or maybe I'm just a poseur) and 2StrokeBuzz should prove it. Their motto is "Kicking Ass and Leaking Gas" and they are about all things Vespa and Lambretta, with a bit of punk rock thrown in. Visit it at http://www.2strokebuzz.com/ .

Of course, some of you probably think that motorcycles are more punk than scooters, and, if so, you should head over to Motorcycho (http://ratbike.org/motorcycho/) which is about all things fast and two-wheeled. They even have a mp3 section that includes some garage and punk sound files. Plus, you can find out your outlaw biker name and be the envy of all your pals (mine, by the way, is Dragstrip King, riding for the Toecutters MC).

Alright. That's gonna be it for this month. E-mail me your websites at netpunk@diehippiedie.com, because then I don't have to work so hard. Or, visit my columns at my site—http://www.diehippiedie.com/. (So, whadd'ya think, was it one of *those* months?)

The Corruption of Journalism in Wartime

MADISON, WISCONSIN—When I arrived in Afghanistan last November, Operation Enduring Freedom—the American bombing campaign that eventually toppled the Taliban—was being hailed by the US media as an unqualified success. Precision bombing and first-rate intelligence, the Pentagon claimed, had kept civilian casualties down to a few dozen victims at most. Long-oppressed Afghan women burned their *burqas* and walked the streets as the country reveled in an orgy of liberation. Or so we were told.

The amount of disjoint between television and reality was shocking. The "new" Northern Alliance government was no better than the Taliban; with the exception of the US-appointed former oil-company hacks in charge, they *were* Talibs. Women still wore their burqas, stonings continued at the soccer stadium and the bodies of bombing victims piled up by the thousands. Not only was the War on Terror failing to catch terrorists, it was creating a new generation of Afghans whose logical response to losing their friends and parents and siblings and spouses and children would be to hate America.

Why didn't the truth about the extent of civilian casualties get out?

I blame the journalists, though Lord knows, some of them tried. As a novice correspondent for *The Village Voice* and KFI-AM radio in Los Angeles, I carefully studied the pros. A brilliant war reporter for a big American newspaper—he'd done them all, from Rwanda to Somalia to Kosovo—filed detailed reports daily from his room down the street from mine as I charged my electronic equipment on his portable generator. The next day we'd hook up a satellite phone to a laptop to read his pieces on his paper's website. Invariably every mention of Afghan civilians killed or injured by American air strikes would be neatly excised. One day, as a test, he fired off a thousand words about a 15,000-pound "daisy cutter" bomb that had taken out an entire neighborhood in southeastern Kunduz. Hundreds of civilians lay scattered in bits of protoplasm amid the rubble. His editors killed the piece, calling it "redundant."

He was an exception. The TV people, particularly the big American networks, were the worst. ABC News, for instance, paid $800 for a 12-mile ride from the Tajik border to the first town in Takhar Province. (The usual rate was 50 cents.) The TV guys eased the discomforts of Fourth World living by throwing around hundreds of thousands of dollars, bribing Northern Alliance warlords to put them up in their palatial compounds—electricity, hot water, beefy bodyguards, the works—and buying access to places where news was supposedly taking place. While they were off chasing fictional Osamas in mountain caves at fantastic expense, American bombs would strike civilian targets in the most obvious of places; only European journos would show up to cover those horrifying scenes. It never occurred to these well-fed American fools that relying for food, shelter and protection on the top officers of one side in a civil war might not give them the best vantage point for unbiased reporting.

Here in America, reputable media outlets pride themselves on refusing to pay for news. That's why Gary Condit couldn't collect a buck for his interview with Connie Chung. But out in Afghanistan, all bets were off. Broadcast networks paid for interviews, access to battle zones and even rides into battle in the bowels of armored personnel carriers. Had everyone refused to pay, no one would have been fleeced. But war is the seventh circle of hell, and breeds such unseemly rat-like behavior among war junkies.

Their unscrupulous conduct turned all journalists, whether from NBC or a Portugese radio station, into fat targets for robbery, rape and murder. Because the TV scum had driven up prices for all reporters, you needed at least $5,000 merely to buy food and a room for a few weeks. And in a nation with an average monthly income of $1.20, anyone who lifted those $5,000 from your bloody money belt would be set for life. Perhaps only the young soldiers who robbed and murdered 42-year-old Swedish cameraman Ulf Stromberg in his Taloqan guest house are legally responsible for widowing his wife, but surely the irresponsible behavior of well-funded TV personnel share the blame.

More telling was the ignorance of Afghan war correspondents about basic facts concerning the war and its Central Asian theater. Of the dozens of journalists I met in Afghanistan, all were well-versed in the ins and outs of warfare in general, and many were unbelievably brave. But none had been in-country before, or even visited Central Asia. My mention of Bishkek drew blank stares from a news crew at the front. "You know, the capital of Kyrgyzstan," I tried. "It's north of here." Nothing. References to other important Central Asian cities—Ashkhabat, Astana, Kashgar—rang no bells for them.

On another occasion I was interviewing Taliban POWs along with a reporter for a US newspaper chain. "I can't believe that that guy came all the way from Chechnya," he commented, scribbling away as he gestured towards a square-faced inmate. "He didn't," I said. "He's Uyghur—a Muslim from western China."

"What the hell would a Chinese person be doing here?" he asked.

"Uyghurs are a horribly oppressed minority," I explained. "They want to break away Xinjiang province from China and form an independent Republic of East Turkestan. The Taliban supported and trained them. There are lots of those guys here." The writer didn't know that

Afghanistan bordered China, didn't understand the international nature of the Taliban's appeal to jihad and thus misled millions of Americans with his ill-informed screeds. Even worse, he knew that he couldn't trust his instincts. Though he never personally witnessed an unveiled woman, for instance, he unquestioningly passed along the Northern Alliance line that burqas were no longer required. "Maybe it's different in other provinces," he said.

It's not that I was any smarter than my fellow journalists. But I'd done my homework. I'd been to that part of the world five times before, and in the process I'd picked up a lot of useful information: how to tell an Uzbek from a Tajik, why Herat is the coolest city in Afghanistan and how much it costs to hitch a ride. I knew my way around, I knew how to deal with the locals and I was able to present my dispatches with a basic understanding of historical, political, cultural and religious contexts. My peers from the networks and the big papers, on the other hand, were used to flying around the world from one trouble spot to the next—and it showed in their inch-deep reports.

"Aren't you going to the press conference?" was a question that greeted me whenever I chose to skip General Mohammed Daoud's morning propaganda briefing. What's the point of standing around, waiting to be lied to? More often than not, the most reliable information could be discovered by talking to newly-arrived refugees in the local bazaar. Instead the other journalists squandered day after day—they'd attend the damned briefings, bitch about them afterwards, but go ahead and report Daoud's lies. Most had to know it was Grade-A BS, but they had to file something, and detailed dissembling was better than nothing.

I would have done the same thing if I'd been assigned to cover a place I knew nothing about.

A century ago the press employed salaried bureau chiefs to sit around places like Kabul and La Paz in the expectation that something newsworthy might someday go down. It was expensive, but it worked; reports filed by long-term residents were smarter and truer than today's journalism-by-press-release. Decades of budget cuts by the corporate-chain media outlets have eliminated such "luxuries," but in fact posting overseas correspondents might well provide substantial savings. For example, someone who'd been living in Afghanistan would know not to pay $800 for a four-bit ride.

(Ted Rall's new book, a graphic travelogue about his recent coverage of the Afghan war titled "To Afghanistan and Back," is out now. Ordering and review-copy information are available at nbmpub.com.)

Some thoughts as I come away from the TV.

I just saw Bush's spin doctor, Ari Fleischer. He had the nerve to say that there's nothing wrong with the fact that before Sept 11, Bush had been warned of al Qaida's intention to train terrorist pilots on US soil to hijack airplanes. There's supposedly nothing wrong with it because the President had no "specific information" that planes would be "used as missiles." A short while later, I saw Condoleezza Rice say the same thing. Still later that day, I saw Bush himself parrot that exact same line. Finally that evening, Dick Cheney, (who's usually the invisible man until Bush gets in hot water) suddenly materialized. He was moaning and groaning like a ghost, in that oh-so-Nixon-like way. The Veep himself privileged TV with this rare appearance just to bring the message that it is *dangerous* and un-American for anyone to dare to question the president during wartime! Apparently the USA is now a fascist state with a leader that cannot be questioned.

Hello? Reality check: Is it really so relevant that Bush was given no "specific information" that terrorists planned to intentionally crash planes? No! Obviously, it's not! What is truly relevant is that Bush was *warned* that al Qaida were planning hijackings in the near future. Period.

Bush's only defense of himself was to say that if he'd known hijackers would use planes to intentionally kill, he would have said something. Excuse me, but isn't a regular hijacking bad enough to warrant some sort of a public announcement? Don't people *usually* get killed in the process of a hijacking? When Bush heard about these hijackings, no matter how "unspecific," back in August 2001, he was still mandated to warn the American public of the potential danger. He was obligated to do so in order for us to have enabled ourselves to decide whether or not we would have chosen to risk flying in September 2001. In addition, such a warning should have put the airports on alert. It also could have informed the hijackers that they were *being watched*. It's possible that such an announcement alone may have given someone cold feet and could have served as a deterrent. Sadly, Bush chose instead to simply do and say absolutely nothing. Nothing at all! That is unacceptable. We cannot escape the fact that this was flagrant negligence right there at the top for all to behold! It illuminates the total lack of competence of the Bush presidency.

You know what? I always thought it was odd that the Bush administration was able to so quickly announce that al Qaida were the prime suspects after 9/11. At the time, I never guessed that the reason Bush immediately had a prime suspect in mind was because he was merely remembering the early warnings he had chosen not to heed…

But we don't have time for questions like this now because suddenly, there's a new terror threat alert blaring from the TV screen! These new terror threats always come at just the right moment, don't they? Like when the Enron scandal gets too close to Bush…Bang! A new terror threat alert! "Please stop thinking and panic." The economy is crumbling, thousands are being laid off…Bang! A new terror threat alert! "Please remember to support your President as you panic." Orange Alert! Yellow Alert! Colorful rainbows of alerts are constantly showering down on us! It's like living in a "Skittles—Taste the Rainbow" commercial. Yes, these lovely Technicolor, threats do come at all the convenient moments, don't they?… except of course when we really needed them… like *before* Sept 11 2001, I mean.

I wonder if anyone outside of NYC who did not see the WTC destroyed with their own naked eyes can appreciate how terrifying these announcements of terror alerts really are. It really puts a guy on edge, I'm tellin' ya…even if I do suspect that it's all just a smokescreen to divert attention from other things, I cannot help but feel, as the FALL put it so well… "Totally wired!"

Something about feeling on edge makes me listen to the GERMS. I've been listening to a lot of the GERMS lately. I always really liked them, but now there is something about their chaotic, tortured, frantic, sound that harmonizes with the chaotic state of the world today. For me, the Germs' musical style reflects the sound of the people's lives falling apart. The world today is breaking down all around us, so if I were to make a prediction about the direction I think at least one stream of punk rock may be flowing in the upcoming years, I'd predict it will be in that GERMS-y direction. Either that, or maybe something head-

ing further into the wild, deliberately antagonistic sound of the late lamented LE SHOK. Bands like these have an agitated, uneasy sound. Our world has become a living nightmare ever since the theft of the White House. I expect that all of this turmoil and upheaval is bound to be reflected in our music. If I am right, I suspect that a new strain of intentionally chaotic, outta control bands will be springing up and expressing that disturbed off-balance that we all feel. At least I *hope* that some punks will begin to express these feelings in their music. After all, it won't help anything to repress such feelings.

As Andy from the LITTLE KILLERS was telling me after a May 25 gig at Desmond's in New York City, the best music really comes from what you feel inside and want to express outward. I agree. There's nothing more snoozy than a band that got together simply because they just thought it would be cool to be a band. If you don't express something of what you are feeling in your music, then you are merely "scene-makers" and not a true band. If all you want to be is a scenester, well, I guess that's OK too, but I believe that style without substance gets old fast. My reaction to such bands is "Ho-hum, what's the next trend?" Right now, I feel nervous tension, and I need to express it. And I see Bush as the cause.

It's not that I'm not all gung-ho about every band needing to have some sort of an overt political anti-Bush message. In fact, an overtly political message can often come out sounding pretentious and contrived if that message is not delivered with intelligence. By merely exercising our brains and our musical freedom we are being rather political. That's good enough as it is. But... it's just that I happen to think that there is also room to have a much louder, bigger voice shouting out in protest against this particular president.

Why is he getting such a free ride? It's not as if he's done anything helpful or useful since he "took" (and I mean that in every sense of the word) office. Bush is at the top. He's the guy we need to target with an information blitz. There should be posters going up all over the nation declaring his incompetence. There should be protests, pointing out how he is so utterly to blame! People should cry out, wherever and whenever he shows his face because his blame is obvious. Everybody knows it. It's just that most people seem to feel uncomfortable saying so out loud. They listen to Cheney and fear "critiquing the President during wartime." That's why *we* who are fearless need to say what we know to be true, loud and clear. We should do it in music, do it in zines, do it on flyers, do it in conversation... whatever. I don't really care how it is done, but it *should* be done, and done in a way that is backed up with intelligence, facts, and common sense. Everything that's going on in the world today is horrendous, and people all over feel as helpless and despondent as they can possibly be. The most anybody had to worry about when Clinton was around was who he had sex with. But all these truly horrific events we now endure *began* when Bush came in. It's obvious, so why not say so?

My only explanation for why we seem so slow to react with massive visible protests against Bush is that we all must still be in shock. When I see polls that say Bush has 90% approval rating, I have to admit that I am shocked silly! Who exactly are they polling? I know no one ever polled me, that's for sure! "90% approval rating" my ass! Approval for what? Approval for being aware that terrorists were going to hijack planes and not saying anything about it? Approval for knowing that Osama bin Laden is to blame for the single worst act of terrorism on the country and being totally unable to locate the creep? Approval for the economy sinking into the pits of depression and hundreds of thousands of US citizens being laid off all over the nation? Approval for a complete inability to get the peace talks going again between Israel and Palestine, that were at least moving in the right direction under Clinton? Approval for being ineffectual in keeping India and Pakistan from inching closer and closer towards the brink of nuclear war? Approval for a President who has only two facial expressions: a smug smirk, and a "where-am-I" look? Approval for a man whose intellect appears to be undetectable? Who has no achievements on his own but got everything handed to him on a silver platter though his daddy and his daddy's connections? Who was not even elected by vote but appointed by Supreme Court? This is who gets a 90% approval rating??? If that's so, than people need to wake up from the narcoleptic stupor they are in! I for one intend to do my part to make that happen.

Intro

So yeah, I'm trying out little titles to break up each section in my column. I'll let you know how that goes. I have mixed feelings about it. Umm. Punk as fuck and skateboarding rules!!!

MANOWAR vs. RHAPSODY, and Mental Illness wins

Yeah, so, I'm a big MANOWAR fan right? I totally am. But I feel like I've met someone else. RHAPSODY. They are from Germany, I think. Now, my favorite part about MANOWAR has always been the anthemic fantasy metal parts; you usually get a good 2-3 songs like that per album with MANOWAR. But fucking RHAPSODY lies down like 12 tracks per album of pure Dungeons and Dragons style metal. After getting turned on to this shit on MP3, I went out and bought all of the five albums that I could find.

The first four all prominently feature dragons on the covers. The fifth album, an EP called *Rain of a Thousand Flames*, goes for more of a goblin warrior theme. This shit is mint. While I'm on the subject of artwork, *Rain of a Thousand Flames* is totally sick. I have this DigiPak version that is super-rad. It's six panels with continuous art between panels, a 24 page glued-in book, and a fucking pop-up goblin swinging a mace at your face. It is so fucking mint, I can't even tell you. Needless to say, these dudes are all posing with swords in their pictures. At one point there is a picture of them posing around a thrown that looks like something straight out of Castle Greyskull with a fucking creepy looking gnome sitting in it. This shit is all fucked up. Oh, and they also include maps of fantasylands in the booklets. These are totally helpful if you are ever stuck in the Desert of Varg and you need to find your way through the Lands of Chaos to find the Forest of Unicorns.

Alright, I don't want to give you the impression that these guys are all style and no substance. With fucking triumphant anthems like "Gargoyles, Angels of Darkness," "The Last Winged Unicorn," "Dargor, Shadowlord of the Black Mountain," "The Village of the Dwarves," "Emerald Sword," and tons more, these dudes are a totally unstoppable force in the world of fantasy inspired melodic power metal. I fucking love them.

Oh, fuck. I was going to tie this bit into the MANOWAR show that I didn't see the other day. Anyway, the show was about 15 miles away from where I work, on a Wednesday night. Unfortunately for me, the venue is about 14 miles away from the last exit where I can go without breaking into total unbearable panic and physical symptoms that mirror a perceived impeding death. Fuckin' a. So, I can fucking add MANOWAR to the list of bands I've missed at the hands of this crumby illness. Oh, well.

Whatever. The reason I'm spilling this shit is definitely not for sympathy points. I've been talking and corresponding with people with mental illness for a bunch of months now. A universal frustration among sufferers is this weird empathy trip that you get from people. It's like everyone is just fucking dying to tell you that *they* are ill too. Maybe this is fucked up, but at a certain point I just can't believe people.

I mean, what the fuck? I've met and fucking talked to people at parties who wouldn't shut the fuck up about how they have Social Anxiety Disorder. I'm lucky; I don't have that shit. But this fucking numb-nuts that's yammering to a total stranger about there "disorder," sure as fuck doesn't either.

Being a human is a bummer sometimes. Regular people feel anxiety. You go through shit. People have shit to overcome. None of that shit is necessarily an illness though. I don't mean for a second to invalidate people's feelings and experiences. I really don't. But, for real, it sucks to be ill and have people lay this trip on you.

I've met dudes who come through my town on tour, and had conversations about mental illness. People say shit like, "Yeah, I have that shit too man, when I get back from tour, I usually lock myself in my room for like two weeks." What the fuck am I supposed to say to that? I haven't been more than 35 or 40 miles from my house in like three years. I just can't hack it; I freak out and bolt toward the safety of my house. That's an illness. What you are talking about is some fucking time away from your pals, you fucking dick. Jesus.

Another time, I got a letter from an *MRR* reader that tried to compare the fact that he has a kid and doesn't get out too much to my agoraphobia and panic disorder. I mean that's just a ridiculous example, so, whatever. I'm not even getting into that one.

So yeah, what the fuck am I talking about? Jesus. MANOWAR. Okay, me missing the MANOWAR show. That's a symptom. That's an illness. It's my life being controlled by my illness. When your little quirks, your anxiety, your being bummed out, or your whatever-the-fuck... when that shit begins to interfere with and control your life, that's when it's illness. Not a fucking minute before.

So, to all the well people, don't fucking lay trips like that anymore, you fucking dicks. And to all the ill people, don't sweat trips like that anymore.

Alright, I'm wrapping this little spiel up. Did I come off like a dick? I'm not trying to be all "sicker than thou" or some shit.

"They are the Punk Gestapo, no one can stop 'em"

Okay, here starts the part of the column where I profile Scene Police Records. They are a DIY record label from a little, out of the way country in Europe called Germany.

There was a band from Long Island called THE HOWARDS that a had a song called "Scene Police." I'd throw down some tall coin on a wager saying there ass-loads of crumby bands out there with a song called "Scene Police." Whatever. Fuck them. There is only one *real* Scene Police, and that's the fuckers over in Europe who run the amazing Scene Police Records collective.

My contact with these guys has always been Dennis. He's always struck me as a hardworking and honest dude, who totally loves the DIY punk and hardcore. Dennis's correspondences are always good for a drinking story or a tirade about his girl troubles. When I asked him if he had any final words for the profile his response was, "Umm. Punk as fuck and skateboarding rules!!!" Me and this guy might have been separated at birth. Motherfucker.

Scene Police started in 1997 when Dennis and his pal Emre were doing a zine called *Interpol Times* and spun shit off into a benefit CD for Food Not Bombs. Five years and 30 some odd records later, it's run as a collective with around five members. Elke handles the bulk of the bookkeeping, Rolf does the graphics and promotion, Martin does the touring, and Harti and Dennis do all the shitwork. Dennis insists that the collective is run in such a manner that everyone has a say in how things are run and decided. I'm inclined to think that he's actually an evil fascist tyrant who comes to work on an evil looking horse and bosses everyone around. Whatever, I guess.

Scene Police has been trading its records out all over the world from the very beginning. You can find their shit in the states through Ebullition, No Idea, Stickfigure, Traffic Violation, and tons more. You can also track down their shit all over Europe and in places like South Africa, and South and Central America.

Upcoming shit on Scene Police includes the COLT *Marec* LP/CD, TUPAMAROS/PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS split 7", a new TUPAMAOS LP/CD; WASTED *Down & Out* LP, FORCED TO DECAY LP; ODDBALLS *Shithits* CD, and more.

If you can't wait for that shit, out now is the WILBUR COBB/MY OWN LIES split 5", FOR THE DAY *Love isn' t Brains, Children....* LP/CD, STRIKE ANYWHERE *Underground Europa 2001* 7", LANDSCAPE *Positive Punk Power* LP, STALINGRAD 10", BITCHIN' 7" and tons more.

You can check out the Scene Police website at www.scenepolice.de. It's a great site to look at if you're looking around to rip off a color scheme. That's where I got the Traffic Violation colors! The physical address for the Scenesters is Scene Police, c/o dpm, Humboldtstr. 15, 53115 Bonn, Germany.

You're Fucked, I'm Fucked

I get about four letters a week in response to this column. As I suspected when I started out, there are tons of people out there in our punk and hardcore scene dealing with this shit. I get letters from people with Panic Disorder, Depression, Agoraphobia, Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, and more.

So, most of these letters are people looking to connect with another person going through similar shit. So, instead of me writing back crappy half-ass responses like I have been doing lately, I have an idea. I'm starting a Mental Illness pen pal network. This way people can forge real communication and shit. Because honestly, I am really shitty at answering mail! Really, I'm horrible.

Anyway, if you want to get hooked up with a pen pal send me over your contact info, with a brief explanation of why you are interested. What I will do is hook you up with someone to correspond with.

Obviously, this shit is brand new; so if you have any questions or ideas, please let me know. Feel free to send either your email address or your mailing address. Whichever is cool.

Mental Illness sells records, man!

I read a totally sweet description of the new DILLINGER FOUR album.

"Minnesota's unlike-the-others punk rock superstars' new album. Fueled by booze, humor, and a strong chemical imbalance, the band continues their rich tradition of blazing punk antics, obscure social commentary, and psychotic behavior, all in a style that brings new meaning to the term "energetic."

This was from a distributor carrying the record. I think it's totally interesting that whoever wrote the description thought "a strong chemical imbalance" would be a good selling point. I'm not offended or any stupid shit like that, but it's just a weird thing to read. I think stuff like this definitely speaks to the point that Mental Illness is glamorized in our scene. Whatever, I guess. From what I can tell a chemical imbalance is really not that cool. I don't know. Whatever.

Conclusion

I think the column went alright this month. Breaking shit up into sections with titles was okay, no? That third one is line from a HOWARDS' song. Fucking Lubrano. The guy shits his pants. I mean, come on!

***

Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are available on the web at www.trafficviolation.com. Just scroll down to my ugly mug and click on that shit.

In return for the good press I expect the dudes at Limb Music to send RHAPSODY picture disk LPs to: Wells Tipley, P.O Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. So, a few months back I mentioned my birthday. I got a few really nice letters. But best of all was a totally gnarly MANOWAR postcard from Ricky from NV. What a mint thing to do. This dude wrote for no other reason than to wish me well and pass on something he thought I'd enjoy. It was seriously the best present I got.
2. I plugged my website in the endnotes last month and I still feel guilty and creepy about it.
3. Andy Low from Robodog Records in Virginia changed the name of his label to Robotic Empire. I, for one, am not recognizing the new name. What a sell out! What a chump! No really, I love this guy. I think we might be dating. Actually, we're just friends. BFF.
4. I know we're not supposed to write about other columnists, but seriously, since that picture hit the pages of MRR, who *isn't* crushing on Arwen Curry right now?

So the other guys in my frat, Sigma Nu, tell me, "Ya gotta go talk to her. You're a pledge. She's a Tri-Delt." So I make my way across the crowded apartment-complex pool house once again to where she is standing. She is beautiful. Blue eyes, blonde hair, a chest that defies gravity, and legs that go to her neck. The perfect Barbie doll. I say, "Hi, remember me? You just told me to fuck off, but could you please try to be nice to me. At least talk to me. My brothers in the frat are putting me up to this. Please be nice." She just stares at me. I can see the neon sign flashing "vacancy" behind her shallow eyes. Then she says, "Look, I don't like you. I don't like your type. That curly hair. That big nose. Go away. Jew." Florida. So I walk back to where my frat brothers are standing drinking beer directly from the tap of the keg. I say, "Listen guys, she doesn't really wanna talk to me. Can't we just forget the whole thing?" They all start yelling that I'm a pussy, and a Sigma Nu isn't a pussy. They insist that I go talk with the Barbie doll. They say that if I don't, I'm out of the frat. I think about that for a moment. Then decide, what the hell, I have already given them lots of money, I might as well try to stay in. I start to walk back across the crowded room to where she is standing. She sees me coming her way, and she narrows her eyes into cat-like slits. Suddenly I bump into my friend Chris. He is an alumni of Sigma Nu, having graduated from the University Of Florida a couple of years ago. Somewhere around 1978 or so. And now he was a big time marine sergeant, based at some fort somewhere, helping to run a boot camp. He asks where I am going, and I tell him. He suggests that maybe he could help me break the ice with her. It turns out that is not all he broke. Not by a long shot.

My first semester of college took place some years back. And that is when this event occurred. I guess I gotta start off by saying that I had seen *Animal House* a zillion times, and it was my favorite movie next to *Rock And Roll High School* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show.* I never even would have thought about joining a frat if it weren't for that movie. It was the funniest fucking thing I had ever seen. All these guys went to school, got drunk all day, boffed beautiful girls, and got in fights with preppies. Sounded perfect, and sounded punk rock, so when I got to college, and rush week came around, I looked for a "Delta House."

The only guy I knew at the University of Florida, besides my new roommate, Jim, whose father was an imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan in Orlando, was this guy named Louis. Louis and I had gone to the same high school in Tallahassee, Florida. Louis graduated a half a year before me, and went on to the University of Florida. This was now his second trimester, and he was on academic probation. He had received a zero point zero as his grade point average for his first trimester, and if he didn't pull straight A's this time, he was out. Of course he didn't get straight A's, and of course he did get thrown out. In fact, he got nowhere near straight A's. He got one D. And the rest of his classes he failed. I, on the other hand, got mostly A's, except for one class that I failed. And to this day, the only class I ever failed. Ever. In my entire life. Bowling.

Fucking Bowling. Stupid Bowling. Asshole sport. Something middle Americans do one night a week. Or say they are doing, meanwhile, they are cheating on their spouses. Something Fred Flintstone does. Something Ralph Kramdon does. Something that a lot of Floridians did. Asshole state. Shithole state. Stupid State.

Anyway, I took bowling my first semester 'cause it looked easy. It was a physical education credit, and it seemed a hell of a lot easier than something like football or track or something. I could just see myself with a bunch of jerks out on the football field throwing the ole pig skin around. "Go out for a pass, Tabb!" I run to catch the ball, miss, and fall on my face. They'd all laugh, and tell me Jews can't catch footballs 'cause they were made of pigskin, and therefore they are unclean. Then, when it would be time to shower, they'd all laugh at my dick for being circumcised. Meanwhile, their dicks would look like rotting Vienna sausages. Yeah right. I'm gonna play football. And track. Forget about it. The only time I'm gonna run the fifty or the hundred is if some guy is chasing me with a fucking knife. So I took bowling.

Now there where a few problems I didn't know about when I signed up for bowling. One was that all the classes were full, except for first period, which took place at 8:05 a.m. The second problem was they graded you by your bowling average and one final exam. And the third, was the typical Florida problem. My teacher was a redneck. And she didn't like me. At all. I'd show up for class half-awake and half-drunk, always. I would always wear my leather jacket and Ramones shirts, and most of the time, throw gutter balls. It was fucking early in the morning. Like I was in the mood to throw a heavy black round object at a bunch of things way down at the other end of a long piece of wood. Right. But I tried. I never missed a class. All the other students would laugh as I would do my best Fred Flintstone impression, by standing on my tippy-toes, and run down half the lane before releasing the ball, which would fly halfway down the lane, before landing loudly, which would usually piss the shit out of the teacher. She'd yell, "Tabb, you are supposed to roll the ball." I would nod my head. And then throw the ball up in the air again.

As the semester went on, and I was drinking more and more, I actually got better at bowling. I was soon able to knock down pins, and actually started scoring above one

hundred. I was amazed, as was the rest of my class, who, for some reason, always gave me my own lane to practice on. Anyway, soon I was becoming a regular bowling guy. Sometimes I would bowl strikes, and sometimes, even in my own lane. Finally, on the last day of class, our teacher gave us our final. Now, at this point, I had a steady "C" average going from my scores, and I figured, how hard could this test be? I mean, it is bowling. So I didn't study. The book. The bowling book. The three hundred page bowling book. With illustrations. Written by some big wig bowler. No doubt, a friend of Mr. Flintstone. Some guy who probably wore a big Elks hat on his head. And who had his own bowling ball. And perhaps, even his own shoes.

So, I open up the 20 page booklet, which was our final exam, and almost fainted. It asked a lot of question. I mumbled "fuck," and the teacher said, "What did you say, Tabb?" I said I said "fuck." The teacher said, "Oh," not quite sure how to answer that. Dumb redneck. Anyway, all the questions were really hard. And really stupid. All from that fucking book that I bought at the campus bookstore and never opened. Like lots of the books I got there. College is so fucking stupid. Ya gotta buy books that you are never gonna read, and books ya never wanna keep. I got a whole collection of them I never even opened. And then, like when ya wanna go sell 'em back to the store, they wanna give ya like one third the price. If you're lucky. Then they go sell them for more, and the cycle continues. It sucks. And this bowling book was one of them. I couldn't believe I paid like twenty five dollars for it. Geezus. So, I'm looking over this test, and I figure, "well, there goes my "C" average." There was no way in hell I was gonna pass this test. There were questions like, "How many centimeters high is a standard bowling pin?" Yeah right. How many centimeters high is my dick when I'm pissing on your head, redneck? And then there were questions about bowling etiquette. Bowling Etiquette!!! What, like don't burp so loudly when someone is rolling the ball? Don't eat food near the lane? What? It was a fucking oxy-moron. So I got really pissed. This test sucked, and I, George Tabb, was not going to waste my time even reading these questions. So I did something artistic. It was one of those "fill in the bubbles" on a separate sheet of paper tests. So I filled in the bubbles. I filled them in good. With little black dots, so they made the shape of a bowling pin, that had a tip shaped like a penis. It was great. Circumcised and everything. I was the first in the class to finish my test. So I stood up, walked over to the teacher, and gave it to her. She looked at the answer sheet, then at me. Then she looked at the answer sheet again. I think she was not quite sure of what to make of it. I forgot she had probably never seen an uncircumcised dick before. Her boyfriend, or husband, I'm sure was not cut. And all the cow, pig, and horse dicks she had seen probably weren't circumcised either. Florida.

Anyway, so I give her the test and start to walk away. She calls me over to her and whispers, "What the hell is this?" I tell her it is a test answer sheet. She says that by looking at it, she can tell that I will probably fail. Wow, how'd she figure that out? I tell her I don't care. She says, "Look Tabb, I have never had a student fail who actually attended class. Take the test over." I look at her like she is nuts. She tells me she will give me a week to read the book, and retake the test. If I pass, she will give me a "D." I look at her. Then I think. For about half a second. I then tell her that I'd rather fail then get a "D" in bowling. I mean, how pathetic is that? A "D" in bowling. It would be better to have failed, and look like I didn't try, then to get a "D", and look like I put some effort into the class, which I did, by the way, having to get up fucking at the crack of dawn every Monday morning. Fuck that. She again told me she never failed a student who showed up for class, I told her I'd be her first. And I was. Bowling. Right.

So Louis is the only friend I got there, and we decide to go to rush week together. We both figure we will join the same frat, have the same friends, and life will work out perfectly. It didn't.

Rush week began, and we went to lots of the frats. Mostly, the guys in the houses just looked at us as if we were from some foreign country, and didn't speak English. They'd introduce us to other guys who looked the same as us, and leave us to talk to one another. It sucked. Most of the guys in these frats had names like "Biff" or "Skippy" or something. And their girlfriends were named like "Muffy" or "Debbie" or something. Assholes. But we wanted friends. And dammit, we were gonna find 'em.

Finally we stumbled upon the Sigma Nu house. It was entirely by accident we even arrived there. We had gone to "Kristal Burger," a sort of third rate "White Castle" that is located in the south. Anyway, we were both depressed about rushing the frats, and both beginning to realize that maybe the "Greek" way of life wasn't for us. Then we heard these screams, and Devo. Fucking Devo. Then we heard the Ramones. Wherever these sounds were coming from, we had to be there.

So we followed the Blitzkrieg Bop to a dumpy house located near the rear dumpsters of Kristal Burger. Hanging crookedly over the front door were the letters EN, which were the Greek signs for Sigma Nu. We weren't quite sure if this was a frat or just a wild house party, but we didn't care. They were playing cool music, and there were people throwing up on the front lawn. So we decided to go in.

As we walked up the front steps, Louis's foot broke through the top stair. It crunched, fell apart, and Louis's leg went through the wood, down to his crotch. Punk Rock. I helped pull him up, and then we approached the front door. As we did, Louis remarked that he was thirsty, and maybe he'd get a Coke from the soda machine on the porch. He said that Kristal Burgers always make him thirsty. They just made me nauseous, and bloated. So he puts the required thirty-five cents in, pushes the button marked "Coca-Cola," and out comes a Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. We had arrived.

We walked into the Sigma Nu, with Pabst Blue Ribbons in our hands, and dreams of wild orgies and fraternal glory in our heads. As we stepped through the front door, some girl ran up to me and kissed me on the cheek. I could smell the vomit on her breath. Then some brother introduced himself to Louis and I, and welcomed us to Sigma Nu. He told us that this was not their "regular" house, but a temporary one. A temporary one they have been renting for about five years. The brother explained that they used to have a really nice house on Frat Row, but they burned it down by accident. Then they had gotten a new one, not as nice as the old one, but a new one anyway, and they had also burned that one down also. So now they were behind Kristal's, waiting to for the workers to finish their new house. Actually, a few days later, I went and saw the "new" house that was being worked on. It was still an empty lot.

Louis and I got very drunk that night, and the brothers invited us back the next night to their next party. It had a new wave/punk rock theme to it, and everyone there had temporarily colored their hair either green or blue or something. Louis and I showed up in our leather jackets and punk rock t-shirts, and everyone thought we looked pretty cool. Like real punks or something. They gave us lots of beer, and this one brother, Tony, invited us to his room to listen to the new Devo album. Louis remarked to me how "cool" this all was. When we got to Tony's room, he pulled out a large mirror and razor blades, and a shit load of cocaine. He asked us if we wanted any. We said "sure." He then asked us if we had ever done "coke" before. We said

of course we did. Louis whispered to me, "George, what do we do? I never did this before. If my dad finds out, he's gonna kill me!" I told Louis to shut up, and not to make us look uncool in front of a brother. So Tony hands me the mirror with a pile of cocaine on it, and tells me to do a line. I'm not quite sure what a line is. And I am not quite sure how to do cocaine at all. Do you eat it? Do you lick it? Do you shoot it up? So I tell Tony, "No, please, you go first." So Tony takes the razor, separates some coke, and snorts up a line through a rolled up dollar bill. I figure, hey, that looks easy, and do the same thing. As I snort the stuff up my nose, I feel it burn all the way up to my brain. Then through the top of my head. Out of my head, through the roof. Through the roof, and out through the clouds to the fucking moon. Wow. Suddenly I feel really great. Like everyone is my friend. Like this frat, and all the brothers, are like my own brothers. Suddenly I feel as if I belong. I give the stuff to Louis and tell him to do it. He does. His face turns all red, and he has this weird look on his face. He opens his mouth to say something, but nothing comes out. I say, "spit it out, Louis," and he does. All over me. He vomits up all the Kristal burgers onto my leather jacket and Nike All-Courts. Tony laughs. I'm glad he thinks it's funny. Actually, he thinks it is so funny he invites all the brothers and little sisters up to the room to look at Louis and I. They all laugh. We start to feel bad, but they tell us not to. After I clean myself up, we go downstairs to join the rest of the party, and pogo until dawn.

The next day one of the guys from the frat calls me and tells me that they have had a vote, and they want me in the frat. They want me to pledge. I tell them great. Then I ask about my pal, Louis. The guy stutters for a few seconds, and then makes up some nonsense about there not being enough room this semester for Louis, but maybe next time he could join. I tell them that I really want to be in the frat, but I gotta think about it.

I call Louis on the phone and tell him the story. He says, "Tabb, you sorry-ass-sucker, join the fucking frat." I tell him that I won't join without him, but he insists that I go for it. He tells me that he will probably flunk out anyway, so he won't be around to be a brother. And why go through all the hell of being a pledge, and not get to be a brother. I feel really bad. One the one hand, I really wanna live "Animal House," but on the other, they suck for not taking my pal, Louis. I hate people like that. All through school, people always made fun of me for not hanging out with the "right" people. I remember, in sixth grade, David Sussman, another Jew, told me that I would be much more "popular" if I hung out with him and the cool people. He said I was really cool, and why did I wanna hang out with a bunch of losers who were my friends. He said I should dump them, 'cause they would never do anything for me, and hang out with him and the other preppy assholes. He said it would help my "image." Then he told me something I will never forget, he said it was "all about image." I told him fuck you very much, and to get a clue. Anyway, I was unpopular all through high school, but I had *real* friends.

So here I was, faced with this dumb decision. Looking back, I should not have pledged the frat without my friend, Louis, but I did. And Louis did remain mad at me for a short time, but he got over it. What he didn't get over was the time we were both mugged here in New York City, but that's another story.

I returned to the frat the next night, and the brothers announced to me that me, and one other guy, named George, also, were the only two pledges of this semester. They said it was a small frat, and we'd like it. Then they told us it would only cost us five hundred dollars, and all that money would go into building the new house. Somehow I got the money from my father, who asked me if Sigma Nu was a Jewish house. I told him yes, even though it wasn't. In fact, I was one of only two Jews in the frat. It turns out that one of the reasons they wanted me was 'cause they thought all Jews were rich. Hah. Anyway, they told me that pledge meetings start tomorrow night, and then they gave me some book that was all about the history of Sigma Nu, and how this guy named Paul Warfield Tibbets had flown this plane called the Enola Gay, and how he bombed Hiroshima and killed lots of people. In the book it said he was one of the founders of Sigma Nu, and all the brothers were very proud of this fact. The book also had the frat creed and motto, which I was supposed to memorize. Right. It also talked about VMI, Virginia Military Institute, the place where the main Sigma Nu house is supposed to be. I realized that all of this was bullshit, but I wanted the beer and the chicks, so I went along with the game and told the brothers I'd read the book, learn the creed and motto, and come to the pledge meeting the next night. I wish I hadn't.

During the whole meeting, this crazy guy named Walter, dressed only in a bathrobe and slippers, swung a golf club at my head, and kept yelling that he couldn't believe that I didn't memorize the creed and motto. The other brothers laughed, and threw beer bottles at me. Full bottles. When the meeting was over, I was all bruised and beat up. I felt like crying, but then Tony gave me some coke, and I felt much better.

The next few weeks were more of the same. During the pledge meetings they would basically beat me up, and the rest of the time, I was fucked up on cocaine and beer. It was great. Sort of. Somehow I was getting my school work done, and had even found time to start a band, the Roach Motel. Then came spring break.

Spring Break is like a free-for-all for frat boys and sorority girls. Everyone fucks everyone else. Everyone being everyone but me. The whole time we were in Daytona, I slept in a bathtub, which was sometimes padded with vomit, which of course, made it more comfortable. Everyone else got a bed. But I was a pledge. I was beginning to think that maybe this frat thing was not for me after all. But I figured I'd finish what I started.

Then came Hell Week. I shoulda known that it was time to quit when they started telling me that my leather jacket was nice, but not exactly what the fraternity had in mind for its brothers. But I didn't. I shoulda known it was time to quit when they told me that a brother shouldn't be in a band, and should only go out with certain types of girls. But I didn't. I shoulda known it was time to quit when my KKK roommate, Jim, asked me if they had made me do the elephant walk yet. See, Jim was also pledging a frat. His frat was the Kappa Alphas'. Or KA for short. Actually, it shoulda been called the KKKA's. Kappa Alpha is a very *white* frat. I think the main frat was somewhere in the deep south, and all these guys in the frat prided themselves on being "good ole boys." Jim would tell me stories on how his dad was a Kappa Alpha, so they had to let him in. He also told me that his frat would help "get the niggers and kikes" off campus. KA wanted to make things the way the used to be. The right way. The white way. And Jim thought this was very important. So he didn't mind when he had to do the elephant walk as a pledge for his frat. Actually, thinking back, he probably liked it.

The elephant walk. Ahh, where to begin? The elephant walk is something a lot of frats make their pledges do. They probably got the idea from watching *Dumbo*, a film that was probably too intellectual even for them. The idea is this, all the pledges get down on their hands and knees, and form a large circle. Like a ring of elephants. Only it's frat boys instead. Then they just crawl around in a circle. Only they are naked. I guess it is not so bad, except for the fact that in order to look like elephants, the frat boy must

put one thumb in his mouth, and put the other thumb up the ass of the guy in front of him. Kinda like they have trunks or something. So here's all these guys with thumbs up one anothers asses, crawling around in a circle. But then comes the tricky part. The "ringmaster", usually a brother in charge of pledges, blows a whistle, and the frat boys must now switch directions. That means taking the thumb out of the mouth, and putting it up the ass of the guy behind you. It also means taking the thumb that was up the ass of the guy in front of you, and putting it in your mouth. Fun, fun, fun.

So, I probably should have quit before Hell Week. But I didn't. Thank God they didn't make me do the elephant thing, or much else for that matter. They did, however, one night tie me up to a pole in a basin that was usually reserved for kegs, and piss all over my legs. I was kinda drunk, and didn't really care. Besides, they didn't get any on my jacket, anyway.

Near the end of the semester, Sigma Nu had its big social with the Tri-Delts. The Tri-Delts were our sister sorority, and this was supposed to be the big event. The brothers told me that if I behaved myself at this party, and if I could pick up a sister and get laid, I would definitely be a full brother. I thought that kinda sucked, since I was a virgin at the time, and there was no way in hell I would pick up a sister, never mind be able to sleep with her. But I went along with it anyway. But I gotta tell ya, I was beginning to not like the whole thing. In fact, I was kinda getting really sick of all of it. I mean, here I was, a pledge to a frat that was *supposed* to be like *Animal House*. At least, that is the way it appeared. I expected to meet people like John Belushi and Tim Matherson. But instead, these guys were like the Omegas in the movie. Stupid frat boys who were hell-bent on control. And uptight, also. This was not being very much fun. And I was seriously thinking of quitting, but I decided that I'd go to this dumb party anyway. I figured, what the hell, I have never been to a Barbie Convention, anyway.

And that is what it was. It was fucking amazing. All the girls had blonde hair and blue eyes. I couldn't believe it. It was Hitler's wet dream. Or my roommate, Jim's. And they all talked with these stupid southern accents, saying things like, "How y'all doing tonight?" or "We are sure glad you came to our little ole party," when the "we" was just one person. What the fuck is wrong with people in the South that they always gotta refer to themselves as "we." Assholes. Anyway, so there are all these Barbies walking around, and I just ignore them, and go straight to the keg. I figure I'll just get really drunk, and fantasize about being a Ken doll, or maybe a GI-Joe with a kung-fu grip. But my fantasies are interrupted by the brothers, who insist I go talk to this Barbie doll across the room. So, I quickly down a beer, and walk up to her. I say, "Hi, my name is Ken, you must be Barbie." She answers, "Fuck off." Fine, I figure. Enough of that small talk. I go back to the keg and continue to drink. The brothers ask me how it went with the chick, and I tell them she is not interested in me. They tell me that I am acting like a pussy, and Sigma Nu's aren't pussies. They insist that I try and go talk to her again. So I make my way across the crowded pool house once again. I approach her and say, "Hi, remember me? You just told me to fuck off, but could you please try to be nice to me. At least talk to me. My brothers in the frat are putting me up to this. Please be nice." She says something to the effect of "Go away curly haired Jew." So I do. I go back to the brothers and tell them to forget it. I have had enough. This girl does not like me, and that, is that. They tell me that if I don't talk to her, that I will be kicked out. I figure that I have already given them lots of money, so I might was well do as they say. I start to make my way across the room full of Barbies once again, and bump into my friend, Chris. Chris is a Marine, and his job is to train new recruits at a boot camp. He is an alumni of Sigma Nu, and is just about the only guy I can stand who has anything to do with the frat. He would get weekend passes from whatever the fuck fort he trained at, and come down to Gainesville on the weekends. Sometimes we'd go out and get drunk, and shout Ramones songs out the window of his Chevette. He was like six feet three inches, and really, really strong. He had a crew-cut, and really large muscles. A lot of people were afraid of him. I think a lot of the brothers were, as well. And I don't think they liked him too much, but they were too afraid to tell him, so he continued to hang around the frat.

Anyway, I tell Chris that I am going to talk to some girl who doesn't want to talk to me, and he says he'll join me. I figure, cool, if she tries to hit me, I'll have a body-guard. I approach Mailbu Barbie once again, and say, "Hi, I think we got off on the wrong foot. My name is George. This is my friend, Chris. I am a pledge. He is an alumni. Please talk to me. It is very important. The brothers are watching, and if you *just* talk to me, they'll leave me alone. Can I get you a drink or something?" She just stares at us. I say, "Um, please, be nice." But she isn't. She says to me, "Fuck off, you little Jew, they should have stuck you in the ovens with your relatives." So I spit on her. Right in her fucking face. Chris looks at me, amazed. I have now had it with these frat and sorority jerks. And all there social games. What a bunch of phonies. Assholes. Two-faced morons. Let them have their own little clubs and friends. Fuck 'em. I don't need 'em. I turn to leave, but then she says something else. She says, "And fuck you too, you big marine asshole. Go swab a deck or something." Suddenly Chris's face turns all red and purple. Then he talks in a very calm voice. Too calm. He say, "Mam, you just insulted a marine. And a marine is a servant of The United States Of America. So you have just insulted The United States Of America." And with that, he gives her a right hook to the face, and instantly breaks her upturned little pig-nose. She goes flying backward, over a table, and lands on her little Barbie-butt, holding her bleeding nose and crying.

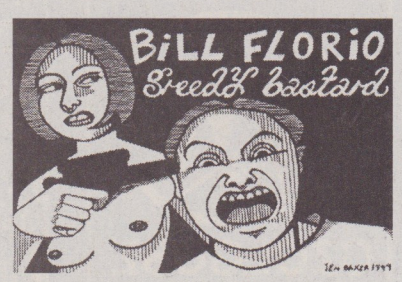
Suddenly the whole place is quiet. Everyone is looking at us. All that can be heard is Barbie, sobbing. Suddenly some brother yells, "Get them!" And everyone starts chasing us. Chris looks over to me and says, "Hey Ho, Let's Fuckin' Go!" and we do. We bolt out the door and to his Chevette. There are like fifty frat guys running after us. And lots of Barbies, too. We hop in the car, and Chris starts the car and guns the motor. The Sigma Nu's are getting closer. Chris realizes that the fastest way outta this apartment complex is to put the car in reverse, and drive out, backwards. We do. All these frat guys are chasing us on foot, and some have hopped in their cars. We are now going down a main street in Gainesville in reverse. We are both screaming, feeling the adrenaline pumping through our veins. I start to sing "Beat On The Brat," and Chris joins in as a bunch of cars are now chasing us. "Beat on the brat with a baseball bat, oh yeah!" we both sing as the car is going like fifty miles an hour in reverse. Then Chris tells me to watch as he does his best James Bond impression. He jams the clutch, and puts the car in fourth gear as he spins the steering wheel sharply to the left. The car does a full 180, and suddenly we are going forward at like sixty miles an hour. He puts his hand up, and I slap it. We both scream with joy as we make our getaway.

Finally we ditch all the Sigma Nu's and the Tri-Delts. Chris opens his glove compartment and pulls out a bottle of Jack Daniels. We both finish off the entire bottle, and as he pulls into the parking lot of my dorm, I thank him for the ride, and all the fun. He tells me that he had a great time, as well, but he thinks that we both won't be hanging around Sigma Nu anymore. And he was right. The next

day the phone rang, and Jim answered the phone. He told me it was Sigma Nu. I told him to ask them what they wanted. He did, then got this smirk on his stupid face. He told me that they wanted to tell me that they had had a vote, and they have decided to "Black Ball" me. To throw me out of the frat. I smiled. Jim looked at me funny and asked me why I was smiling. I just smiled back at him and shrugged my shoulders. Take my life, please.

Endnotes:

1. hotnthick@georgetabb.com
2. New Jersey's greatest band, Worse, just keeps getting, well, better. I'm hope they don't get better than worse.
3. Here's my monthly shout out to The Kick! You guys go!
4. The new best band in the world is Dean Dean & The Sex Machines. Made of of ex-Blanks 77, and the man himself, these guys rock harder than my dick on viagra. And that's hard!



I just realized there are a whole lot of people around me who haven't any freaking clue about anything in our culture. I don't know how I figured this out, but I think I was chatting with someone who is getting a Masters in astronomy at BU and made some mention of Jerry Lewis. He was like, who is that? Oh wait, I know. There's a picture of Jerry Lewis when you go to www.theshemps.com. And he was like, "Who's that guy?" I thought, "Shit, I'm not gonna even ask if he understand who Shemp is." So over the past two weeks I compiled a little test to give me an idea how clueless everyone is. This is a sample.

Jerry Lewis
Jerry's Kids
Malaya's
Perry Farrell
Italian Ices
Dean Martin
Boris Karloff
Charlie Chaplin
Harry Houdini
Henry Mancini
Al Jolson
Ben Casey
Jerry Lee Lewis
Lucille Ball
Bela Lugosi
Jimmy Durante
Patsy Cline
Hank Williams
Steve McQueen
Fred Astaire
Sammy Davis, Jr.
Chuck Willowry
The Odd Couple
Babe Ruth
Pumas
Johnny Carson
Depends
Junior Mints
Pine Sol
Merv Griffin
McNugget
Scrubbing Bubbles

Now I understand nobody in California know what Malamars are, and I admit most people will recognize Mancini's work but not know his name. Chuck Willowry and Ben Casey are probably generational things and nobody seems to know who Al Jolson is despite the fact that he was probably the most famous celebrity in the first half of the 20th century. But I really don't think it's absurd that a normal person with half a clue has never picked up what any of these things are.

OK, I know there are people walking this earth that are complete dumbasses. Some girl instant messaged me randomly, and was given the test. I think McNugget was the only thing she got right. She said she was 16 or 17. I asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up and she answered, appropriately, "a model." This sort of scenario doesn't bother me, in fact I expect stupid people to not know anything.

The disturbing thing is someone else getting his Masters degree in English couldn't recognize 90% of the test either. A person I know who works in a television studio got fewer than half correct.

I did see a certain pattern arise—now that we have this new internet to fill our time, it seems we can become even more brainless than ever. I may have sat in front of the television for the first 12 years of my life, but I think TV has brought me up a lot better than these new generation of parents who disallow television and replace it with the internet. A lot of bright people can use the internet to their advantage, since if you're looking in the right places you can become an expert on certain things. The problem is, if you're a guy with a blank slate, a dud with no personality, you're going to end up having your unflavored gelatin brain filled with a lot of color but no fruit or flavor. I think it would really suck to never get the joke, but if you have no idea a joke is being made, I guess it will never bother you.

I just can't comprehend this sort of behavior. I always feel sort of clueless about a lot of things, and I'm constantly looking to broaden what I read and watch and entertain myself with. I can think of countless times where I didn't get the joke, but swallowed some pride and had it explained to me. I may be a little brash sometimes, a little bit rude or a little bit over-happy about everything, but for crissakes, my worst fear would be turning into a dud.

So, the next time you watch the *Simpsons* and Professor Frink comes on and makes a reference to a Fantastic Voyage or creates a love tonic that suddenly turns him into a cool guy in a smoking jacket, you can just sit there and wait for someone to fall down or slam their face in a door.

bill@candids.com write me and let me know how ya scored on my little test.

We were shopping in the local grocery store. Nothing unusual going on, no other kids to show off for, no soda or candy had just been digested for an ultra sugar rush. So why my sweet little two year-old decided to attack me blitzkrieg style is still an unsolved mystery.

Before I bent down to the bottom shelf to do some price tag, ounce-for-ounce comparison, I thought she was content. She was just sitting there secure in her shopping cart kid seat all buckled in. Calm before the storm.

The next thing I knew, I had a kid on my back. That's right, in less than a minute, she had somehow wiggled up and out of her cart seatbelt and took a flying leap right onto my unsuspecting back. All four limbs gripping me at once, her thirty-pound chimpanzee self almost knocked me over.

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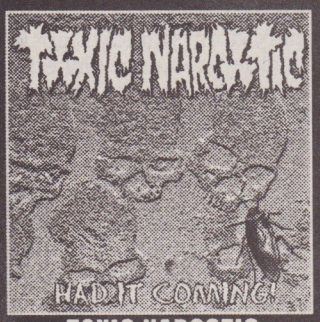

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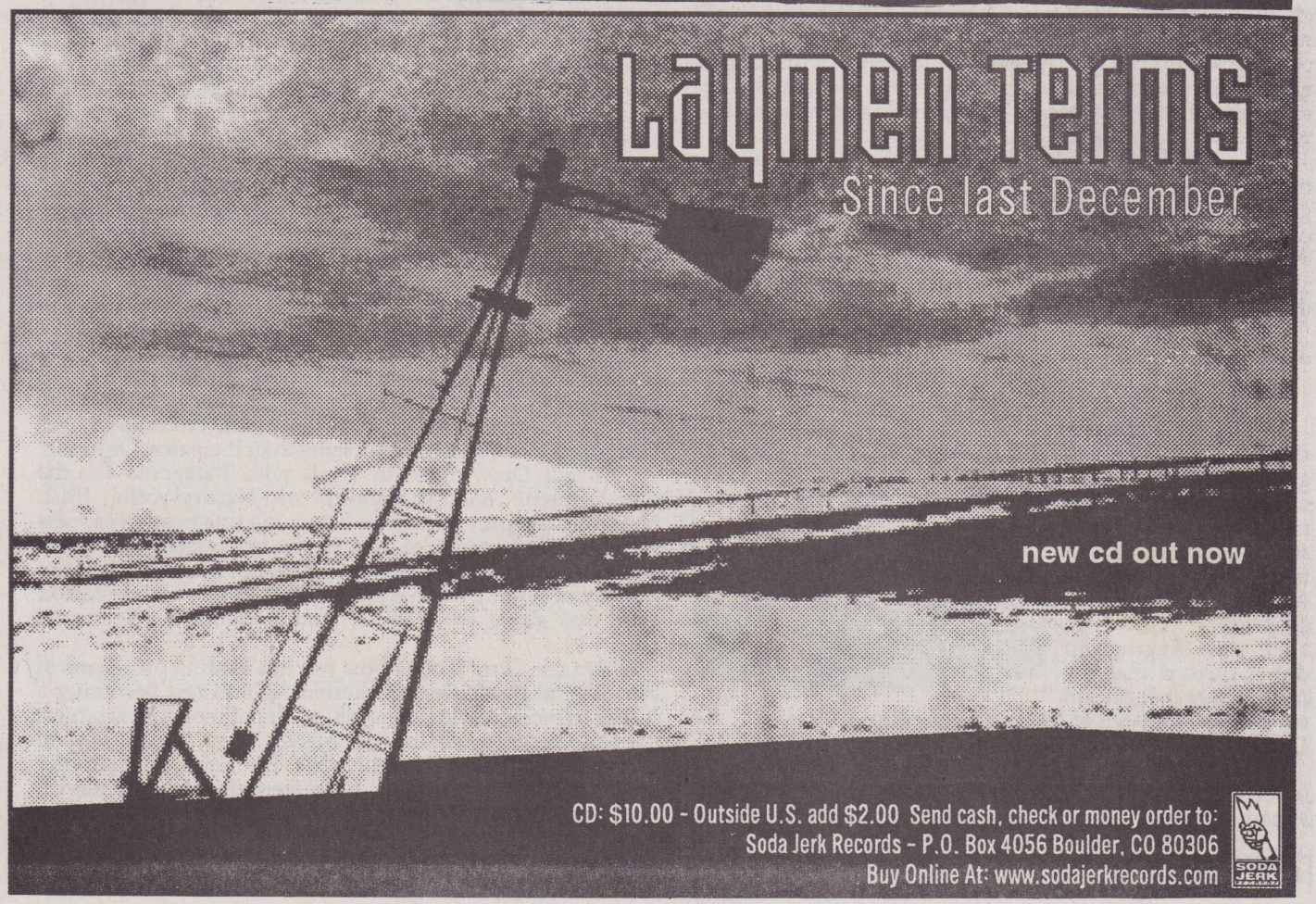

Almost.

Fifteen years ago I could back squat 225 in my High School's weight room, so I still have a little muscley juice left in my thighs and used all of it to grunt myself up while trying to wrestle her from my back and around to a face to face confrontation. Trying is the key word here.

I was able to get up, but before I could whip my arms up behind my back to grab her, she bit my shoulder so hard I screamed. I was trying to do too much at once I suppose. Just as I succeeded in whirling her off my back, before I had her stopped in front of me, she cranked back and belted me across the face, sending my halfway-there Coke bottle glasses flying down the aisle.

I literally had no idea what had just happened, what had hit me. I was frozen; she was laughing her ass off, fucking cracking up. And the lady who was shopping a few cereal boxes down from us? Well, she was obviously and purposefully avoiding us. I could almost hear her unsympathetic brain counting her rosary beads, "Don't look, don't look, don't look, avoid Satan spawn's gaze, don't look, don't look, don't look."

Stupid lady. It wasn't her hell; it was mine.

Since becoming a parent, there have been many, many times when I just don't know what to do. I'll go ahead and admit that it happens almost daily. But usually, there's someone close by to ask, "What do I do?" And I really don't care if it's a stranger. When I need help, I'm not ashamed to ask for it. I may not like what they have to offer, but at least it's something, anything, a glimmer of hope. And here on the cereal aisle, I had none. I was in shock.

Yes, all of the above helpless thoughts flooded into my brain at once. And demon spawn was still laughing and I was still hurting, physically and emotionally. I was actually embarrassed in front of the other shopper. But she was acting like nothing happened. And well, not knowing what else to do, so did I. I followed that stupid lady's lead. It was my only choice. I would have regretted unleashing my pain back onto my girl. Among the long list of things parents have to be sometimes, a sponge is one of them. Sponge mom absorbed the swear-to-god unprovoked outburst and was left very sopping.

Demon spawn. At the Neurosis show when I was four months pregnant, that's what someone warned me I was going to give birth to. They said the kid was going to come out with Neurosis induced horns. Well, they were right, only you can't see them except for on special grocery shopping trips, and then only I am the one who is privy to the anomaly.

Does anyone know what shows I should take her to in order for her to be exorcised?

I had originally decided that I was not going to write about food or agriculture this month and just share some interesting tidbits from the spectacular world of multinational economics. However, as I was digging up dirt, I noticed that the main things that caught my eye were related to food and agriculture. Oh well.

Green jeans.

Clothes are something that we don't spend a heck of a lot of time discussing. Actually, let me correct that...mainstream America spends way too much time discussing clothing, but only in a "Do these pants make me look fat?" sort of way. Activists of course spend much time and effort to make the world aware of the despicable labor practices of the textile industry (read: sweatshops), and with good reason. However, what is often not discussed is the raw material used to make clothing.

There are thousands of different materials used to make clothing: denim, cotton, wool, leather, nylon, vinyl, fur, and so on. Activists (especially of the animal-friendly variety) sometimes appear to only be concerned with those made from animals like leather, fur, and to a lesser degree, wool (after all, wool doesn't require killing sheep, and sheep actually appreciate losing a big coat during warmer seasons anyhow). It's a little disappointing though that more of us don't stop to consider the origins and required processing of all the other materials required of clothing. Sadly, a lot of what we wear these days is more a product of chemists at fine companies like DuPont and Dow, than of nature. These materials go through a ton of nasty, polluting chemical combinations in order to form the clothes that we wear. Even some of those seemingly harmless products are attached to some awfully shady conditions. Cotton would probably be the best example of this ever since Monsanto and their buddies in the genetic engineering world have been messing with it.

Even Patagonia, the badge of pride for granola yuppies everywhere, creates a few paradoxes with their products. In a sense, it's fantastic that they've found a way to transform old plastic bottles into a clothing material (fleece), but how crappy is it that their raw material depends upon the constant supporting of corporations like Coca-Cola and PepsiCo? To give Patagonia some credit, it was probably this exact thought that was going through their heads when they first heard of PLA.

Natureworks PLA (polylactic acid) is a new material that was unveiled earlier this year by the Cargill Dow Corporation. Cargill Dow, as the name might suggest, is a LLC company formed jointly by the Dow Chemical Co. (the infamous company responsible for a plethora of environmentally-dangerous toxins and—if you believe the hype—the current illegal status of marijuana) and Cargill, Inc. (the largest private corporation in the world and perhaps the sketchiest of them all in regards to the level of secrecy they operate under). PLA, in contrast to the way it sounds, is actually a genuinely amazing breakthrough. Without getting into details that I, a chemistry drop-out, won't quite be able to explain, PLA is produced from corn, using natural sugars from the corn as a binding agent instead of the petroleum-based oils often used in textile manufacture. This breakthrough could be considered miraculous in more ways than one: it uses a renewable annual crop as its base, cuts the use of petroleum, utilizes an amazingly low-polluting process, and can be used for a plethora of products beyond just clothing (plans are underway for carpet, upholstery, and dozens of other PLA products). Finally, technology has been used to solve more problems than it creates. Or has it?

Cargill Dow chose to work with Patagonia for the development and marketing of NatureWorks PLA. Naturally (no pun intended), Patagonia was head over heels for the development of such a cleaner, greener material. However, Patagonia's relationship with Cargill Dow went quickly downhill when they discovered one certain factor: PLA was going to be made from genetically engineered corn.

You see, Dow is one of the world's leading producers of agricultural pesticides and herbicides and fast becoming a leader in biotechnology. Cargill, on the other hand, is largest corn-producer/trader on the planet. They control 60% of India's corn crop (arguably not the safest commodity around at the moment) and a huge percentage of the US corn market as well (sorry, I couldn't dig up the exact figure

on that) and, a detail that should easily explain the true intentions of the biotechnology movement (no matter what their advertising campaigns claim), their genetically-engineered corn pulls a better price than non-altered varieties.

And, to add insult to injury, Dow Cargill has already begun a massive greenwash advertising campaign to promote NatureWorks PLA, heralding themselves as the most environmentally-friendly thing since oxygen. In one particularly disgusting ad, they throw some generic, self-promoting tagline on a backdrop of a pretty little butterfly. Oddly enough, the ad fails to mention that genetically-engineered crops are responsible for what is now being considered one of the quickest declines of any natural species, that of the Monarch butterfly.

So, yet again, what could've been one of the best breakthroughs in technology ever—beneficial to humans and the environment that we so often pit ourselves against—is now just another cog in the corporate greed machine. As Jill Zilligen, Vice President of Environmental Affairs at Patagonia, states, "At first, we could hardly contain our excitement for PLA…it almost seemed too good to be true. Unfortunately, it was."

Drunk on power.

Just last week, it was announced that the Miller Brewing Co., previously owned by our pals at Philip Morris, was to be sold to South African Breweries, based in London in a $5.6 billion deal. To be honest, I was actually a tad excited to hear this. Miller, based right here in Wisconsin, bought out my hometown's infamous brewery, Leinenkugel's, nearly a decade ago. Although I love Leinenkugel's (as it was probably in my baby bottle), it pissed me off to no end that Philip Morris was their parent company. To think that this would no longer be the case was a heartening thought indeed.

Probably not unlike most of you (or the majority of North Americans for that matter), I had never heard of South African Breweries until last week. So I turned to my best resource: Hoover's. Hoover's is a business-research company that provides annual guides and a massive website about nearly every corporation in the world. Typically, their information is utilized by the stock market crowd, but it's this sort of information that I seem to find as the most thorough and honest—they state every corporate abuse in unapologetic, financial terms (the Wall St. Journal is another great example). So, this is what the opening two sentences of Hoover's capsule on SAB stated: "Monopoly is the game of choice at South African Breweries. Based in London, SAB's largest operation is South Africa, where they maintain a dominant—if not oppressive—98% of the beer market." To hear Hoover's, a company whose main job is to pretty much praise the champions of global capitalism, call SAB's market presence "oppressive" almost threw me out of my seat.

As it turns out, South African Breweries operates all over the world, with their largest markets in Africa, Asia, Europe and Central America. Until now, they had stayed out of the US market. Their purchase of Miller now makes them the 2nd largest brewing company in the world, just behind Anaheiser Busch. The name of the new company has just taken the top spot on the list of my favorite post-merger names: SAB Miller PLC (just rolls off the tongue huh?) The sale had many folks in nearby Milwaukee frightened for their jobs, but they put out an initial statement claiming that there were no plans for layoffs. However, Hoover's mentions that they are well known for their efficiency, so I'd like to place a wager that the layoffs will come in just over a year.

And if all of that is not sick enough, one will be happy to note that the sale was contingent upon Philip Morris maintaining a 36% share of the company.

On the opposite note, thanks to ultimate wisdom of my good friends, Mike Olson and Ryan Rose, I finally got a chance to tour the local New Glarus Brewing Co. this past Saturday. They are hands down the best brewery in Wisconsin which, by extension, makes them the best brewery in North America. The tour was given by the wife half of the couple who owns the brewery. She went into much detail explaining why corporate beers (and even some microbrews) have so little taste (man, who would've guessed—it's related to this idea of profit-driven production). My favorite aspect of the New Glarus Brewery is that they not only strive to include local ingredients in their beer whenever possible, but they also distribute exclusively in Wisconsin and Chicago. As a person who considers issues surrounding good beer to be of utmost importance, I was naturally curious about their prospects for expansion and whether or not they had plans to get bought up like so many other successful microbreweries, so I asked. Her reply: "Good Lord, NO! That'd be my dying day! They (the big breweries) know better than to even approach us anyhow." As for expansion, she notes, "Maybe someday we'll start selling in Minnesota too. But, to be honest, we're almost at capacity trying to keep up with our Wisconsin demand." God, I love it here!

You deserve a break today.

In a story that's had me intrigued for the past few months, it was announced earlier today that McDonald's has settled its latest court case for $10 million. The plaintiffs: a class action group of vegetarians who claim to have been deceived by the company who incorrectly labeled their french fries as vegetarian when they were, in fact, fried in beef fat. Today's CNN quickvote question was the following: Do you think $10 million was enough of a fine?

As a vegetarian of 8 years, here are my thoughts. There are typically only about four reasons (often in combination) that anyone would give for becoming (and remaining) a vegetarian. 1) Animal rights. This is based on the premise that it is cruel and unnecessary to maintain cycle of death to simply eat. Furthermore, the companies that 'produce' and sell the majority of 'meat' on our planet have no regard for the lives of the animals before they are killed. 2) Environmental reasons. It is no secret that modern meat-production is one of the most environmentally-destructive practices on our planet. Through deforestation for grazing land, excessive waste of water and inefficient utilization of land and crops, this argument shows that meat-based diets are the very epitome of unsustainable agriculture. 3) Health. Even before all of the somewhat-recent outbreaks of E.Coli, mad cow disease, hoof and mouth disease and (the newest) chronic wasting disease, meat was already proven to be an unhealthy food. It's been shown to raise cholesterol and blood pressure levels and is a high source of fat (often associated with obesity). 4) Taste. Many folks claim that it wasn't until they switched from a meat-based diet that they actually came to utilize their taste buds and discover the wide variety of food that's made available by nature.

Now, considering these four reasons (or really any other reason) for adhering to a vegetarian diet, allow me to pose the following question: *what the fuck are you doing eating at McDonald's*?!? Seriously. It is my opinion that these folks should be fined $10 million dollars themselves. Not that I'm seriously trying to lessen the crimes committed by the McDonald's Corporation (and I think you all know me better than that by now), but I'm serious. If you're a vegetarian for any reason and you're eating at McDonald's…you are straight up dumb.

Shutup already.

Send letters and a copy of your zine that our kick-ass collective bookstore might want to carry (by the way kids, that does not mean that it has to have a political tone) to me at: Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative c/o Nathan Berg 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703.

So I thought of a few ways we could protect our country from terrorists and just make it safer all around. You see, I like to come up with ideas about how to make the world better. That's just the kind of person I am. I like to help people. One idea is that we put foam padding on everything. That way if a terrorist pushes you down you'll land on something soft. Another thing we could do is instead of having explosives we'll just sell lots of fart powder at explosives stores. That way when the terrorist walks into a crowded building and hits the switch, instead of killing a bunch of people he'll just smell really bad and will bring shame to his cause. Hey what do terrorists love? Hot dogs! If a terrorist had a hot dog in his hand he'd be more likely to eat the hot dog than to kill someone. That or great big lollipops. Well thats enough political talk for now.

I went and saw the new *Star Wars* movie. Here is what I didn't like about it: There just wasn't enough Hugh Grant in it. I mean come on! I wish they would have had Hugh Grant play Yoda instead of a computer. He'd be sitting there with cheap glued-on ears and when someone would ask him for advice he'd put his hands in his pockets, blink a lot, look worried like he's saying the wrong thing and say in his foppish-Brit apologetic Hugh Grant way "Terribly...terribly sorry I am. Um.. Do you think...um perhaps.. um I could get a ... could get a...a blowjob or something like that? I mean damn. Need to stay in character. Yes, um yes, A blowjob could I get?" And then the part of Anakin Skywalker could be played by Mr. Bean. Man If I could have the power to make the *Star Wars* movies they'd be so much better. So anyways Mr. Bean could get into all kinds of wacky situations like when he's trying to woo Queen Amidala he could have trouble opening his car door or get his dick stuck in something. Oh and the part of Obi Wan Kenobi could be played by Danny Glover. There would be a big light saber battle going on and then the camera would go to him and you'd hear some saxamaphone riff then he'd say "I'm too old for this shit." then there'd be more saxamaphone music. Just put that guy in *any* situation and he'd make it funny. Ewan MacGregor was good in the movie. I like that guy because every interview I read about him he just talks about drinking. Someone will ask him how the town he's in filming a movie in is and he'll say "I've been drinking a lot of margaritas there. They've been verra good to me." I actually went on the Ewan MacGregor diet once. In one interview they asked him how he lost weight to be a junkie in *Trainspotting* and he said "My girlfriend put me on a special diet." The interviewer threw out a bunch of diet types, atkins, blah blah blah, and he said "no, she had me switch from lager to gin & tonics." Genius! And it really works too! Aside from those suggested changes the new *Star Wars* movie was fine.

Apparently some sex tape I made with R. Kelly is floating around. How embarassing! He promised me he wouldn't show anyone and he was an "artist" who makes "artistic films" which involve him having sex with me. Being a naive young boy from Modesto I fell prey to his charm and now I'm the laughing stock of the whole office. Every time I go to the bathroom I look in the mirror and see a sign someone stuck on my back that says, "Kick me! Or have sex with me if your name is R. Kelly! And *film* it!" To top it off when I walk into the building the old security guard says "Hey Ringhoff! Fuck you!" to me and then a little kid missed the t-ball and hits me in the crotch with a baseball bat. That's it for this month! jringhoff@email.msn.com if you want to be my friend.

The Future Belongs To Me!

Last month you read about the TANKA RAY CD *And So I Abide* on Cosa Nostra Records. The label, put together by members of the HUDSON FALCONS and the GC5, has two other current releases that you will want. Cosa Nostra CD number three is a split CD called *67,104 Miles Later*, featuring THE HUDSON FALCONS and the GC5. THE HUDSON FALCONS start off the melee with "Who's Talking Shit." Mark Linskey and company follow this tune with "POW/MIA" and these poignant lyrics: "Left in the should have been/ Forced to pay for political games and politicians' sins/ Poor kids whose lives were stolen from them/ Their fate sealed by the government when/ They were left behind when the rest of the troops came home/ They may be dead or still in prison their whereabouts unknown/ Poor kids sacrificed in a politician's war/ And then left in the jungle, without hope death is born/ POW-MIA, we can never forget, let's bring them home today/A nation's soul, in hell it burns cause 59,000 never returned/ Such conditions of war have never been seen/ Our own Agent Orange, no purpose, the jungle and its heat/ Conditions of imprisonment documented well/ Never have humans been put through such hell/ I can't imagine what their families must go through everyday/ Not knowing must be a parent's worst hell to pay/ We pray one day home, they'll someday be/If they are dead let there be closure, let them rest in peace/ We must demand their release, flex our muscles/ The government deemed it wasn't worth the hassle/ It's more important to have a trading partner/Who will work for low wages and buy our products/Then it is to get our boys home/That rationale is twisted and just fuckin' wrong/ A nation's soul, in hell it burns 'cause 59,000 never returned."

The next song you'll hear is "Rich Kids Can't Play Rock n' Roll" which will lead you into a full-tilt ROLLING STONES cover "Rocks Off." Mark sings a plaintive ballad. next. "Get Me Another Drink" is a depressing but true-to-life song. After a quiet introduction THE HUDSON FALCONS slam into the song with punk rock fury. Read these heart rending lyrics: "I always wondered why my daddy drank everyday/ So he wouldn't have to think about tomorrow and try to forget today/ It's only work and sleep everyday all he does is exist/Why bother living if life is gonna be like this/ How long is this emptiness gonna last?/There's nowhere else to go, hey buddy keep fillin' up my glass/ I'd rather by numb than feel this pain/ Why bother dreaming if it's gonna be in vain/ Get me another drink/ Sometimes I walk these streets hopin' the pain will go away/ But there's nowhere to turn so me and the pain we're both gonna stay/ The burning in my stomach makes me want to go out and kill someone/ So I'll just sit here and slowly kill myself/Get me another drink/ Growin' up I always thought I was gonna make something of myself one day/ But just like anything else I loved, I fucked it up and it slipped away/ Shattered dreams are so painful, broken hopes only break hearts/ Nothing to enjoy, nothing will bring you pain it's easier just to give up/ I'm resigned to my fate, no use fighting no more/ I've fought all my life, my heart and soul beaten bloody on the floor/ Next big step in my life is gonna be my death/ So I'm counting the days until I draw my last breath/ Meanwhile get me another drink."

Song number six is performed by the GC5 and this "Daily Bread" anthem has the balls out gruff vocals supplied by Doug McKean with good back up singing by Pete

Kyrou (guitar), Paul Weaver (lead guitar) and Dave McKean (drums). Doug can write a mean lyric!! The words to "Daily Bread" unfold like this: "Another day inside the cages/ A broken back to personify my wages/ I slave away I get no say/ They pay me a pauper's pittance/ Then they send me on my way/ And they're takin' all we're makin'/ Give us this day our daily bread/ To the victor go the spoils/ And to the rest the toil/ Until Friday comes and we set our sails again/ Another day, another dollar/ Another tug on my weary choker collar/ I search in vain for better days/ They take the best years of my life/ In return for steady pay/ And I'll never break for steady pay/ And I'll never break bread/ With the bastards who have fed/ On the suffering of the workers and the poor/ Soak me in the blood of heretics and martyrs/ 'Til we sell ourselves short no more." Doug and his cohorts motor through two sensitive songs: "By Your Side" and "Fountains," and arrive at a real rocker: "Rhythm and Booze." This fucker kicks a lot of punk butt with Paul and Pete working the guitar attack really well. Check these lyrics out: "I wear black and blue/ I got the black man's blues/ I beat myself up to pay my white man's dues/ I get up twice for every three times that I fall/ I'll be what you make/ I'll be what you create/ Me and the boys wash down these mistakes/ We're all hair and nails, feeling nothing much at all/ I'll take what you create/ Me and the boys wash down those mistakes/ We're all hair and nails, feeling nothing much at all/ I'll take it like a man/ That's how it's being given/ As above, so below my angels are unforgiving/ Those suicide notes/ That I wrote/ Were only written as a hoax/ That you'd later feel a lashing from my pen/ Out of spite/ I'd sit down every night/ With a bottle and threats in black and white/ It keeps me honest and on my toes about what I am/ You did your very best/ To try to bring me down/ Now I'm counting my fortunate stars for each day above ground/ Give me those black and blues/ Give me that rhythm and booze/ Gimme something to lose/ And I'll burn through it faster than your sympathy/Gimme something to prove/ Gimme a couple of brews/ And I'm out the door in my walking shoes/ Cause all my friend are put out and sick of me/ I've got a closet full of skeletons kicking harder than gravity/ A mouthful of lies and a heart full of cavities/ You'll look good in a casket/ And that's to say the least/ You'll never escape and you'll never rest in peace."

Next up you get "Oklahoma City Sick Bed" a sort of punk rock love song and the grand finale is a scorching version of "Who's Talking Shit" (radio edit), of course this live CD has a few "low fidelity" moments, but overall it is good and quite representative of the live songs these two great bands offer. Speaking of "live," THE HUDSON FALCONS were in San Francisco recently and played a show with THE WHISKEY REBELS and INTREPID A.A.F., and these FALCONS kicked ass! Look for a WHISKEY REBELS' CD on GMM Records in the not so distant future. INTREPID A.A.F. have disbanded. Look for Ox to surface in a new band.

The very first release on Cosa Nostra Records was GC5 *Singles Collection*, (1997-2000). This fucker is packed with some really potent punk rock! The first two tracks are from a 1997 self-released CD called *A More Aggressive Approach Towards Peace Keeping*. Tracks three through seven appeared on the Transparent Records 7" EP called *Buy American*. Two of the strongest songs on this EP are "Stand for Something" and "Right to Live." They go like this: "Stand for Something"—I used to tell myself tomorrow would be OK/ I used to lie to myself everyday/ 'Cause all I see is this jaded apathy/ And people bitching about how things used to be/ All I know is you've got to stand for something/ Even if that something's not a lot/ Don't you know, you've got to stand for something/ Even if it's the one thing that you've got/ What's the matter with the kids right now?/ They're either lazy or they don't know how/ To sort through problems and deal with their shit/ I'm frustrated and don't want to deal with it." "Right to Live"—Down and out and lookin' for a culprit/ Yeah, you're lookin' around for somebody to blame/ You're headin' down a destructive path/ You know this feeling just can"t last/ One way or another something's gotta change/ And you're still looking for someone to blame/ You hate everything that can help you/ Suspicious of the trojan horse/ You hate the world/ You're so cynical, as the disease becomes clinical/ But you're still anxious to march on off to war/ What the hell are you fighting for?/ You hate those environmental wackos/ Yeah, you never were a sucker/ Talk radio and religion can debunk all that science garbage/ And the rich are there because they deserve it/ And conservatives are there to conserve it/ And that's the only right that matters these days/ As the right to rule is stomping/ All over your right to live/ You ratify with your consent a corporate puppet government/ That tells you that it's got nothing to give/ How can you believe that you've got no fucking right to live?."

Song number 8 and 9 are from the *Takin' It the the Streets* 7." The songs were taken from demos that GC5 did and were originally intended as part of a promotional single for a tour that never took place. "Molly Maguire" is the first tune, then GC5 crank out "New Generation." This song has some intelligent thoughts to offer, read on: "Longing back for the old days/ You say you haven't changed/ Everything's passed you by, and now you're estranged/ People move on, leaving you behind/ You make on last grasp to recapture your past/ And those memories you find/ All wrapped up in the corner of your mind/ You pull them to the fore in an effort to consolidate your place/ But all you nostalgia seems like a waste/ New generation, new generation coming up/ We've got our own vendettas that we've gotta settle/ We'll build our own world, our own consequences/ We don't need you to meddle I feel bad for you, mentally imprisoned/ Slave to the past, anachronism/ Who could have foreseen the errors of your ways/ If you don't grow up at all, you'll eventually have to pay/ The simple scope of your character has locked you down and put you in this place." GC5 are one of those rare bands that can write hooks, compose well-thought out lyrics *and* rock like a motherfucker!!

Tracks 11 through 14 came out of GC5's final Transparent 7", called *Price of Security*, and this shit fucking rocks! "Beat to the Punch," "The Cheapest Kinds of Freedom," and "Pile of Evidence" stand as powerful punk rock trilogy. Take a gander at these smart lyrics from "Beat to the Punch": "Tortured and pounded into submission by frustration/ When your whole life becomes an uncomfortable situation/ Bringing on the wild desperation/ And now I'm stranded, left to wallow in the throes of isolation/ Inside the tragedy of this life/ And it gets harder all the time/ I'm always reminded of the punches you beat me to/ And I can't help but think that there's something wrong with you/ Brought up in an antisocial atmosphere pitting one livelihood against another in the quest for profit and survival/ I can't tell my allies from my rivals/ And now I'm lonely and confused, and automation of consumption segregated from everything and everyone/ Inside the comedy of this life/ I'm always reminded of the punches you beat me to/ And I can't help but think that there's something wrong with you/ I remember the times that I stumbled when I should have took a stand/ Gave too much ground too many times and now it's starting to get out of hand."

GC5 finish out this fine collection with "Apologies," "White Collars" and "There is a Power in a Union." The residents of San Francisco were treated to a live GC5 show recently and the band fucking peeled the paint off the walls! Be sure to catch the GC5 live in your town when the chance presents itself! Get these GC5 and HUDSON FALCONS CDs and the superb TANKA RAY debut CD from: Cosa

Nostra Records, 291 Redwood Rd., Mansfield, OH 44907.

Fight 45 Records from Paris, France has an elaborate picture disc out for you punks. This beauty has OI POLLOI doing "We Must Combat" and "Guilty"; BEERGUT 100 doing "Warmonger" and "Fist Full of Copper"; SUBSTANDARD playing "Discount" and "Shithead"; TRUTH DECAY doing "Countdown 98" and "Race Riot"; RIOT CLONE doing "Chumbawanka" and "One Less Parasite"; MASS MURDERERS—(the punkest band on this record)—doing "Drive Me Sick" and "Dirty Money"; DISORDER doing "Free Society" and "Antisocial Reject"; and the legendary VARUKERS playing "What Are You Gonna Do" and "Fucked Up!" Yes! This is a ripping compilation! This label always puts out relentless punk and thrash—great! Write to Fight 45 Records, 1 Passage Krachet, 45018 Paris, France; www.fight45records.com.

This month we get a strong new EP by LOS FASTIDIOS from Kontro Ogni Barriera Records of Verona, Italy, in collaboration with Mad Butcher Records from Ziermberg, Germany. The KOB label is an independent record label devoted exclusively to punk, oi! and ska. The label started out in 1998, built upon the foundations of the now defunct Skooter Records. KOB Records also runs a street punk record shop and promotes live shows for bands. Be sure to look up Kontro Ogni Barriera Records when you are in Verona, Italy.

The new LOS FASTIDIOS EP is called *Radio Boots* , and this shit rocks pretty hard! LOS FASTIDIOS formed back in 1991 and have a stellar reputation within the Italian Oi! and street punk community. KOB has repressed the LOS FASTIDIOS/FFD split CD, *Hasta la Badoria* from 1996 and the LOS FASTIDIOS second album, *Contiamo su di Voi*. the new three song EP rocks from the first note of the title song, "Radio Boots," that leads off side "A." Flip this vinyl over and you get two more street punk gems: "No Leaders" and "Un Giorno Capirai" ("One Day You'll Understand). This is a high spirited street punk release with good vocals, energetic guitars and great back-up singing.

Also out on KOB/Mad Butcher Records currently is the BRIGATE ROZZE / BOILS split EP by the name of *Fight for your Class not your Country*. The BOILS, those seasoned punk rockers from West Chester, Pennsylvania lead the charge with three cooking punk numbers. First you have "Another Tragic Story," which is a good sing-a-long punk anthem with top notch vocals and fucking strong guitar, drums and bass playing. The second BOILS song is a gloomy affair with words that will hit home with a lot of punks. Read lyrics to "Eyes Hit the Floor": "Midnight is far behind this long and winding road/ I ain't got no destination, except the point of no return/ When your eyes hit the floor and your courage takes a back seat/ On the free fall/ Under a full moon looking down on you/ On the free fall/ In a cruel world, looks like I've made my mark/ When your eyes hit the floor and your courage takes a back seat/ On the free fall/ Pain bloody pain is tearing at my gut/ It's as if I took a dagger and plunged it through her heart/ Chorus/ Many years ago, I spun the wheel/ And saw a morbid premonition coming/ And now it seems I've drawn my last breath/ And said that last words that I'll say/ Is this to be my last day/ As this pale blue sky fades away/ And now it seems I've drawn my last breath/ And said the last words that I'll say/ I'm out of breath I'm out of time/ I'm out of reasons why." The BOILS continue to build on the punk rock legacy they've started years ago. Good shit!

Flip this EP over and BRIGATE ROZZE start things rolling with "Trust in Freedom, Trust in Fight." This had rough churning guitars, shouted vocals, and energetic drumming Next up BRIGATE ROZZE play "A Choice" with the twin vocal attack (male and female), and crunchy guitar parts. The third BRIGATE ROZZE song is "Giù la Maschera" and this fucker is fast as fuck and punk as hell! Very good! Write to KOB Records at Via N. Mazza, 65 B, 367129, Verona, Italy, email: kob@bbk.org, or Mad Butcher Records Bergfeld Str. 3, 34289 Zierenberg, Germany, email: madbutcher@pader.

Dirty Punk Records from Villeneuve d' Ascq, France has a rollicking good EP ready for your consumption!! The record is by RED FLAG 77 and the title is *Moving on Top*. This band of veteran punk rockers from Ipswitch, England, continues to play good, solid punk rock after more than ten years of rocking in bars, clubs and stadiums. All four songs have a fast tempo, vigorous singing with harmonies and tricky guitar bits. We move from the title cut "Moving on Top," right on through "There Ya Go," "On the Line" and "Why Do You Do It." All these songs have hooks and memorable playing worthy of RED FLAG 77's punk pedigree. The packaging on this EP is of the highest quality with thick cardstock sleeve, adorned with good pictures. The vinyl inside is nice and thick. Write to Christophe at Dirty Punk Records, BP 302, 59666 Villeneuve d Ascq Cedex, France, email: dirtypunk@wanadoo.fr.

New Blood Records has a new CD for you punks and skinheads! The artist is THE FILAMENTS, the title is *Skulls and Trombones* and these young punks (the average age is 19), from Chelmsford, England, are quite the rage in their home area. THE FILAMENTS combine the punk edge of street music with ferocious guitars, shouted vocals, and trombones! The music has some Oi! overtones with rock-solid rhythm background. The singers, Mike Jones and Jon Fawkes, have excellent voices and both men play exuberant guitars! This is fleshed out by bass, drums, trombones, trumpets, and saxophone. The whole concept works admirably! The band plows through "Trevor," "Patricia," "Punk Unity," "Hiroshima," "Better Way" and "Thrown Away." This shit is very punk and melodic too! Order *Skulls and Trombones* from New Blood Records, PO Box 52, Gravesend DA 11 9Zl, England, newbloodrecords@hotmail.com

Insurgence Records and Publishing, from Toronto, Ontario, Canada has some first rate product for you skins & punks! The first CD available for your listening pleasure is *Class Pride World Wide No.2*. This fucker has lots of good songs by a stellar cast of characters. Check this list of bands, their homeland and the song they perform:THE PROWLERS (Canada) "We Come Out First"; SOCIAL COMBAT (Spain) "Our Enemy"; RED ALERT (England) "Million Dollar Punx"; NOGOOD HEROES (USA) "Populist; THE CLASS OF ASSASSINS (Canada) "For the Kids"; PUB ALL STARS (Argentina) "Radio 69"; BOLCHI (France) "Gueules Cassees"; FUORI CONTROLLO (Italy) "Aggro on the Streets"; THE ANALOGS (Poland) "Blask Szminki"; FATE 2 HATE (Canada) "Fight For Yourself"; JOHNNY GERRIWELT (Euskadi) "Freedom Words"; SIGNAL 3 (USA) "Spirit of Rebellion"; GAROTOS PODRES (Brazil) "Garotos Podres"; THE PROTEST (Czech Republic) "Tri Postavy"; FRONTKICK (Germany) "Danger"; RAZZAPPARTE (Italy) "Noi Ci Siamo Ancora"; WILDCAT STRIKE (Sweden) "Ar Det Demokrati?"; SICK SICK SIX (Portugal) "Quantos De Voces"; CHARGE 69 (France) "Casse Toi!"; FIGHTING CHANCE (USA) "Cowards Pride"; and ANGELIC UPSTARTS (England) "Machine Gun Kelly [live]." Good stuff!

Two of the bands featured on this compilation also have full length releases out this month on Insurgence Records. The NOGOOD HEROES have a brand new CD called *Radio Rebelde*. This contains good punk rock with ringing guitars on many of the cuts—occasionally the NOGOOD HEROES will play a ska number, but don't dismay—the punk will return! The band sings good harmonies and choruses. The lyrics are smart—read the lyrics to "Populist": "I've weighed all my options, my choices are clear/ Sit back and melt with the rest of the years/ Bypass all the questions, go

deaf to those oppressions/ Gaze down my nose, when I'm asked for help/ Revel in the fact of our demise/ Turn a blind eye to sights despised/ Gaze off, our chances blow away/ Luster in it's glory to our dismay/ What have we become, there's something going wrong/ Well rehearsed tragedy, misfortune mystery/ Burned in our hearts and in our minds/ What once was exposed has now been disguised/ You've led your life faithful in your strong convictions/ You always follow the first in line/ How quick you are to point our cynicism/ Please tell me now what's to be done?/ Populist rhetoric/ You're changing all the time, You're talking all time."

CD number three is THE CLASS ASSASSINS with *State of Emergency*. These guys punk out hard! The band crashes into their theme song "Class Assassins" right off the bat - very good! Next up you get the guitar fueled "Urban Rebel," plow through "Full Control," and you come to "Hard Times." This one is a fast rocker with scorching guitars and good deep vocals. After a slower, more melodic tune, "Freedom," you get "Grain of Sand"—a rocking punk number which has fervent political lyrics. Read on: "When you create a cause, it causes tempers to flare/ Ley the foundation, now war is declared/ But the reasons always seem to be so wrong/ Those who don't learn from history/ Will repeat it, it's no mystery/ But the history is what you've been after all along/ Leathered faces of hesitation/ Heads held down across the nation/ It's not just a novel/ Written in a fictional sense/ Rich promises of deceit/ Leads to beggary in the street/ Well a grain of foreign sand can be deadly in foreign hands/ Strike first or wear the mask of shame/ Propaganda, it's the other side to blame/ Cast out your trades for a place in the pack/ The battle's over, now the fighting's done/ It was long and hard but it was won/ While the money lined your pockets, what do they get back?/ While there's too many numbers in the walking dead/ All lined up to listen to what you said/ You tell them what they want to hear/ then you put them to bed/ That's not what they were promised."

Now those are good lyrics! On *State of Emergency*, you get punk hit after hit: "Uprise"; "For the Kids " (from the *Class Pride World Wide* compilation); "Behind Your Screen"; "All the Way"; "No Justice"; "And Without Warning." This is a strong CD! Write to Insurgence Records, 2 Bloor St. W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2, Canada; www.insurgence.net.

THE SOUL BOYS from Hamburg, Germany have a good skinhead/punk CD out on DSS Records now. This one is called *Grow Up or Die* , and the boys deliver some tasty streetpunk with deep vocals and chiming guitar sound that was perfected in the 70s on *All Screwed Up*. THE SOUL BOYS write catchy Oi! tunes. The lyrics on "Corruption and Murder" are a thorough indictment of the politicians : "I see you there behind your desk/ And I really know your smile is just a mask/ You're a so called politician/ But that doesn't impress me much/ Because...Corruption and murder is all that I can see/ This is ain't a good place for me to be/ But people always follow their leaders/ Believe me, it's always the same/ And when the walls come tumbling' down/ They'll start to cry, but it'll be too late/ Corruption and murder is all that I can see/ this is ain't a good place for me to be/ I'll send you a postcard/ Right after I'm at the other side/ I'll feed you with all your pain/ And I'll feel so fine...." The SOUL BOYS have been playing around Europe for quite a few years, and opened some shows for popular street bands like DISCIPLINE, OXYMORON, and the legendary ANTI HEROES from Atlanta, Georgia, USA . Give the SOUL BOYS a spin at your earliest convenience!

Also available through DSS Records at this time is the skinhead band WARFARE 223 from Chemnitz, Germany, with their new CD *Frontline Eastside*. This band grew out of the band GANGWARFARE. The men sing both in German and in English. This CD has slower more melodic parts that proceeds to speed up and turn into gruff Oi!. The guitars pummel you - the deep growl of the vocals makes for a full frontal assault! The WARFARE 223 repertoire on this CD includes their anthem, "Warfare 223"; "The Real Skinheads"; "Mass Media"; "Psychopath"; "Hippie Punk"; "Mieses Schwein"; "Dirty Bastards"; "Unsere Jugend"; the title cut, "Frontline Eastside"; and "Druffiland." This is good tough-minded Oi! for you punks and skins. Contact WARFARE 223 through DSS Records. You can write to Michael at DSS Records at PO Box 739, 4021 Linz, Austria or email at dss@telecom.at, www.dssrecords.com.

Until next month...

See you fucks in hell!

I had surgery on my hand. It turned out that the pain I've been complaining about was not really a repetitive motion problem—but in fact a cyst in my joint which had to be cut out. So, since I have only one hand with which to type (and do everything else, for the time being), I think this is going to be a short one.

Being in this compromised position has been a real challenge for me, because it has made me realize how important it is to me, and how much I depend on, being self-sufficient. It is very hard for me to admit to not being able to do something, and it is equally hard for me to ask for help. I feel as though it should not be, especially when I have friends offering...but some strong-willed part of me has a hard time admitting that I am unable. Somewhere along the line "I can't" was taken out of my vocabulary.

But I am right-handed, and that hand is wrapped up immobile in a bandage the size of my shoulder and I can't so much as wiggle my fingers without a yelp of surprised pain, and I can not use that dominant hand to do a thing...it is frustrating to say the least. And I had to learn to ask for some help.

And on that note—I am going to dedicate this to Beth, my best friend here in Richmond. She is about to move to California and I truly don't know what I am going to do without her. I think it is important for everyone to at some point leave the area in which you grew up—even if it only solidifies your feelings for the place and you eventually return. Perspective is important, and without it you will never know and always question and wonder. Beth has lived in Richmond her whole life, and it is time for her to venture out. For a number of reasons this move will be great for her, and for all of those same reasons, I am totally in support of her and behind her and I wish her the best. But for my own selfish self—well it is going to break my heart to see her go.

I remember the first time I moved away from my hometown. I was 17 and I moved to Boston for the last semester of high school (I had finished early). As I was saying goodbye to two of my best friends, I had that feeling that this was the end, that I would never see them again. And I laugh now because that couldn't be further from the truth. While it was the beginning of a big change for me, our friendships didn't change and for many years to come, wherever I lived, Steve and Rich were an integral part of my life. It seemed as though that never changed, regardless of where I lived. And I have looked back on that departure morning and laughed many a time. I've come to realize that coming and going, moving, leaving, it's not final, because you can always come back. You can always return.

And just because you leave or move on does not mean that you have to lose touch with those friends you have. Sometimes it's better to go and live and experience the possibilities rather than cling to the familiar. At least if you are clinging only because it's familiar. But more often than not—you go, come back, and not much has changed. Sometimes there is comfort in that. My point is that it is important to get out there in the world. And I know that Beth has to do that now.

I treasure my friendship with Beth so much because she is the one person here that is always there for me. No matter for what reason or what time of day—I know that I can call her and tell her a funny story, or cry my heart out to her. I can count on her for rational advice or an easy camaraderie of a silly afternoon or a pensive late night. She is the one friend here who I feel that I share the most in common with—she has helped me with *Slug & Lettuce*, with the book table, and we have the same interest in driving far away for the day just to see a band, or spending the whole afternoon in a bookstore; we can share critical discussions and passionate excitement about punk rock, we both torture ourselves setting up shows, we both can enjoy a walk in the park, a night out dancing, or a lazy time on the couch with the dogs; we both can indulge in dessert and coffee, and we both suffer from social anxiety and can understand it in each other even though we are both very social creatures. When I'm stuck at work, Beth calls me and tells me when the band I want to see is going to play. And if I can't make it, she's often mistaken for me, either because she has *Slug & Lettuces* in hand, or just out of close association. I guess the bottom line is that I know whatever crazy idea or routine plan I have, Beth will always be there. And I know that if I need help or am in the midst of a crisis that I can count on Beth to be there for me, hold my hand, and get me through it. I honestly don't know what I will do without her. I know that our friendship won't change. I know that she will continue to be there, albeit 3,000 miles away. And I guess for me that is the clincher. Over the years, it seems that most of my dearest and beloved friends have lived elsewhere. I think that Beth is the only best friend I have had (at least in recent years) that has actually lived in the same place as I do. It's almost kind of bizarre that it could be so. But in the five plus years that I have been linked to Richmond, Beth has been a part of my life. And it's going to be really, really hard to not have her here, by my side, in my town, and a part of my daily life. It's going to be really hard.

There is a lot more that I could say about friendships, about self-sufficiency and dependence, and the use of one limb without the other. There is also a lot more I could say about Beth... but for now wishing Beth the best in LA (and lots of visits back home) and hoping that my hand will heal so that I can get back to writing better, is about all I can do. Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond VA 23261-6632

PURGEN

Punk culture was formed in mid 70s by the group of people who didn't agree with modern systems, laws, authorities, and police. Most of them were anarchists. They started to wear crazy haircuts and colorful clothes to show that they were different, that they didn't want to be slaves of the system. They expressed their ideas and thoughts through the fast and loud music called punk rock.

Punk culture in Russia was formed ten years later, in the 80s, with the bands like Chudo-Udo, A.Y., G.O. and so on, but most of them broke up.

Purgen was one of the first punk bands in Russia and they are my favorite band. I think they are the best. Purgen is a slang word that means "laxative" in English. This band formed in Moscow, Russia. In 1989 two guys who hated the education and society they lived in decided to form a band. They found two more people who thought the same way and started to write songs and music. During this time they were going to University of Moscow, and University gave them space for practice. At first they came up with anti-Communist name for the band. Unfortunately, they weren't allowed to play with the name like that, because most of the people in charge of University were communists. Since they were writing song about laxatives, they decided to name the band Purgen. They told to principal and other teachers, "in French this word means 'journey in cosmos.'"

The teachers replied, "We know what kind of journey that is."

In a couple of months they were kicked out of the university for having bad attitudes. They had to practice in basements of the factories and warehouses.

Thus far they made six albums: "All Governments are Concentration Camps," "Transplantation of the World View," "Atomic Romance from Garbage Can," "Dead President," "Philosophy of Urban Timelessness," and "Taxidermist of Urban Madness."

The leader of the band, Ruslan, with the nickname Purgen, is the one who writes the lyrics and music. He also is the only who has stayed from the beginning of the existence the band. For almost every album, there were new members of the band, because old ones left. Members left because they weren't serious about the whole band thing, some of them got married and had kids, one of them even turned out to be secret agent from KGB.

I like this band because of the music they play. They define their music style as "punkcore," mixture of punk rock and hardcore. It's fast and loud, and at the same time melodic music.

They also have great lyrics, "against the system, against society, against narrow persons, anti-fascistic, anti-communist, against politicians who create this system and people who live just for money and don't care abut the reality around them." The lyrics are really deep—they open you eyes and makes you think. They make you see dark reality, reality that destroys happiness of this world day by day. Even though Ruslan got kicked out of the university, he got some education and has a great vocabulary. He often uses fancy words that rich pop singers don't even know. There are no swear words in his songs.

Here are lyrics one of the many great songs, called "Megacity."

"Megapollis grew big as forest
All earth is a metal forest
All earth covered with a core of buildings
Multistory concerted coffins
Modern city—it's progress
Modern city—will kill us all
Modern city—computer heaven
Modern city—destroy
Pipes of the factories, chemical smoke
Automobiles and nicotine
Many useless and gloomy people
Those drive me crazy every day
Modern city—it's progress
Modern city—will kill us all
Modern city—computer heaven
Modern city—destroy."

Or another great song, called "Double Image":

"Everybody wants to kill and live

And cover their faces with the mask to be good
You smile to everybody even if you are mentally sick
You say that you are hippie, but inside you are a fascist
You for equality for peace on the whole earth
But pretty often you wish everyone died
Jesus, Jesus—he is in every human
Hitler, Hitler—he is in soul of people
You are going to the work talkative and happy
And at the same time you imagine how you killed your boss
You earn a lot, but it's not enough for you
You will rob poor in the dark side of the street
You make an impression of a Jesus,
But inside you are cold as a Hitler.

These are two of the many great songs about human nature and dangerous world around us.

This band, like all punks, had a lot of hard times. Most of the people hate punks, because they look and think different way. It's hard to survive for the punk in Russia, because of the pressure around. Being a punk is really good reason to be beaten up by some boneheads, and it happens a lot and to every punk. That's the reason why most of the punks become like other people. Purgen did a great job of staying punk for more than ten years and it's not easy at all. Only couple of people from thousands are able to stay, and Purgen is one of those.

In 1994 three members of the band left at the same time, band broke up. Ruslan started to have depressions, and he started to use alcohol and drugs. After a couple months he found power in himself and started to look for musicians. After about a month he found a couple of people. This was really hard to do, because at this time there weren't a lot of people who could play in the band. People that he found lived far away, hundreds of miles away. Purgen was alive and started to make a new album.

There was a moment when the band became pretty popular and earned some money. At this moment bands usually realize that they can make money from music and stop playing the musical style they originally played. They start to play music that most of the people would like to listen, and usually it's pop music. This term is called selling out. This happened to bands like Green Day, The Offspring, Blink 182, and many more. Over time Purgen's music changed, but it didn't change in a pop way. Their music become faster and more aggressive—even though they become very popular in Russia and Europe, they didn't even think of changing their musical style.

Purgen has everything a true punk band should have—looks, music, and killing lyrics, and that's why they are the best.

Right now the band is recording a new album called *Destroy for Creation,* and hopefully it will come out this spring. The band is also making a movie about itself called *11 Years, a Lot of Noise.*

"The band would like to see only punks at their concerts, because it was proven by scientists that if a person is not a punk, he won't understand punk rock and other social music, even though the lyrics are dedicated to the opposite kind of people: narrow people, politicians, people who live for money, and other bastards..."

Unfortunately, the punk scene is often anything but a minority friendly environment. The great void within the scene from the lack of blacks, Hispanics, queers and other minorities (as well as women) has left the scene as seemingly much more homogeneous, elitist, and exclusive than many feel comfortable with. Although it is clearly time for all of these minorities to have their voices heard by others within the community, I can only write on behalf of my experiences as a minority in the punk scene.

The thing that initially drew me to the punk scene (and is still the thing that I utterly cherish) is the scene's idealistic distinction from and rebellion against typical mainstream attitudes and actions. At fourteen I felt alienated by the "who's best looking" contests and weekend party scenes of school. School preached conformity and a "stay in line and keep quiet" mentality. I took an instant infatuation with punk, which preached "fuck conformity and fuck staying in line and keeping quiet!"

Throughout my years in punk and especially during my earlier involvement, it has greatly helped and shaped my life. I have no doubts that I am a much better person because of my involvement with it. However, the punk scene has never really helped me in dealing with being queer. In fact, the scene has often alienated me in the same way that school once did.

Perhaps the most crucial thing a person who is coming to grips with their sexuality needs is a sense of acceptance. Society gave me the impression that heterosexuality was the only possible sexuality and most of the time, it seemed as though the punk scene believed the same thing. There was no noticeable queer voice. I saw no openly queer bands or even queer members that spoke out, no noticeable queer fanzines, or even any bands addressing the issue on stage or in songs in my early involvement with punk and hardcore.

It's hard to gauge how homophobic the scene was because real discussion of queers was almost nonexistent. The only time any mention of queers came up at a show was when "fag" was used as an insult among show goers. I would come from a week at school where I heard kids ridicule each other by calling one another "fag" or "gay," to the supposedly enlightened punk and hardcore shows, where kids ridiculed each other by calling one another "fag" or "gay." And no one spoke out against it. I was left feeling rejected from the rejects (i.e. the punk scene) because of my sexuality. And I'm sure I wasn't the only one.

As time went on I became more aware of the national punk scene and thus, aware of some queer bands or queer members of the punk community. Yet, many of the parallels between the way gays were treated in school and how they were treated in the punk scene continued. Openly homophobic bands suffer less backlash than those bands with queer agendas. Much like in high school, the queer person's band will probably have to deal with a lot more shit than the homophobic person/band. Additionally, I think we are tremendously far from a scene in which queer punks can feel comfortable and unthreatened at all times. In my experience, the high school locker room and the punk or hardcore show have often looked quite similar in their acceptance of queers.

We need to do better than this. The queer presence is still extremely small within punk rock and hardcore. This needs to change. Any queer kid needs to know that s/he is not the only one. We don't need to recruit queers into the punk scene; we're already here. I have no doubts that the punk scene, which is made up of kids who feel rejected from mainstream acceptance, is filled with queer kids. We're just not making our presence known. I'd never suggest anyone "coming out" before they were comfortable enough to (or in a safe enough atmosphere), but those "out" should think about making themselves more visible to other (possibly closeted) queer kids.

I think a domino effect could easily be created. If

more gay kids make their presence known, it will make it easier for other queer kids to feel comfortable coming out. As more of a queer presence is created, gay kids from outside the scene will be drawn in as well. And hopefully, the punk scene will become distinct from the outside world and really be a safe space for queer kids.

However, this responsibility in no way lies entirely on only the queer kids' shoulders. The message and actions of acceptance will be just as strong if not stronger if relayed from "straight bands" as well. The same goes for zines, where we not only need queer zines but any zines to speak out. And show goers also need to think about the implications of accepting bands with homophobic ideologies or ones that like to call kids "faggots" for not dancing.

We can't change the world overnight, nor can we change our scene that quickly.

But each of us can do something to change the atmosphere that exists at many punk and hardcore shows that is often quite hostile to the minorities of our scene. It's high time the punk scene took the leading role for acceptance for the world to follow.

Perhaps I'm missing aspects of the queer punk and hardcore community that actually exist. Aside from the riot grrrl movement, I couldn't think of more than a handful of queer related bands and I don't really know of any queer punk or hardcore fanzines. I'd be greatly interested in knowing about them and maybe even setting up some sort of queer punk network. Please get in touch! panicday@hotmail.com

I Am an Anarchist
I Am a Pacifist

by Brian Burch

If one wants to bruise an ego or create a heated discussion on a music fan or political e-mail list these days, the easiest way seems to be suggesting that violence is wrong. There will all too often be a flurry of responses that can be summarized as having one of three focuses:

(1) White, male, Eurocentric trying to impose a tactic on those involved with militant struggles for survival;

(2) Violence is essential for social change—there would have not been a French, America, Russian, Chinese, Cuban revolution without it;

(3) That violence is essential to bring attention to an issue.

Responding to any of these criticisms is attacked in vehement fashion. And yet I still think my concerns do need to be addressed and considered and not summarily rejected.

My responses to the three basic criticisms are fairly straightforward.

To the first, the answer is clear—the primarily public faces of non-violence in the 20th century have been non-white (e.g. Gandhi, Martin Luther King) or women (e.g. Aung San Suu Kyi, Mothers of May Square). Material, such as Nonviolence to Animals, Earth and Self in Asian Traditions, are studied to help strengthen the theoretical underpinnings of non-violent resistance. It has been those involved with non-violence in revolutionary situations around the world that influenced and inspired non-violent resistance in less repressive situations.

To the second, I point out two things—first, that often massive non-violent resistance that occurred during under repressive regimes or in revolutionary situations, from anti-apartheid struggles to the general strike in Nicaragua, should be pointed to as the real challenge to authorities. Second, and more contentious, I suggest that the means used point to the end result. The more violence was a part of the revolutionary movement, the more it has been used to centralize power and create or recreate a repressive regime by a new elite.

The third critical point is a key part of the 'diversity of tactics' debate. It does require a consideration of what is and is not violence (I believe that property damage, under some circumstances, is not violence as it can be done in a way that does not cause or threaten to cause harm to others). However, the one-day general strike in Toronto during the Days of Action managed to get massive media coverage without violence. And there was more, sustained and positive media coverage (or response to media coverage) to such protests as the Queen' s Park Plant-in or the Hamilton War Show protests than protests that have used force against property (i.e. June 16th 2000 protest at Queen' s Park). And the appeal to violence also seems to be a denial of the really hard work essential to social change—the day to day organizing, networking, coordinating, encouraging, supporting and maintaining a spirit of resistance. If violence works, then I don't need to work with my neighbor to find common ground. I, and a small elite, can obtain the same results with or without their consent if violence is sufficient.

Although I can acknowledge an emotional appeal of violence—the desire for revenge or a sense of urgency in light of a crisis—I can not as an anarchist ultimately accept the use of any tactic that is destructive and coercive. The use of power over anyone is ultimately evil—a term I am consciously using. And if I reject violence but desire social change, I must be an advocate of non-violent resistance. And if I advocate non-violent resistance, it is only logical that I am opposed to war and therefore a pacifist.

Advocating these positions become self-alienating from many forms of public dissent and resistance. As an anarchist, for example, the idea of asking the state for permission to dissent is anathema. Therefore I do not go to demonstrations where permits have been applied for.

Because I advocate non-violence, I will not participate in actions where tactics I am opposed to our likely to be used.

And because I am a pacifist, I will not go to demonstrations against military force that are not also against war itself.

Being self-alienated is far different than exclusion. Experience has lead me to believe that I am welcome to add my body to any mainstream protest—providing I agree to obey the marshals—or to more militant protests providing I do not interfere in the actions or, indeed, am willing to share in the risks. And, like most, I am welcome to take part in any public discussion up to the point where my views are felt to be beyond the acceptable. In one setting, this exceeding of tolerance could be raising the perspective that people of faith should be holding the churches accountable for the harm they have been and continue to be a part of. In another, it can be suggesting that not everyone present supports violence for political purposes. But welcomes are extended and it is, I admit, stubbornness on my part that results in exclusion. All I would have to do is be silent.

I think I am troubled most by the comments that sparked this reflection by two things. I am unable to understand why violence, indeed killing of one' s opponents, can be accepted by anarchists as a valid political tool. This ultimate negation of the value of individuals is a view I can understand being held by those that advocate the value of a revolutionary state or a vanguard party, but I can' t reconcile it with core anarchist values.

And I can not understand why people opposed to war add their voices to those that advocate political violence as if there is common ground between pacifists and those trying to legitimize violence. Particularly in struggles such as that in the Middle East, adding one' s voice to the Palestinians or to the Israeli' s can only continue the use of violence. It is time for pacifists to seriously consider saying support for justice struggles is to be intimately linked to support for those actively involved in non-violent forms of resistance. This would include standing between Israeli tanks and Palestinian refugees, but also standing with Palestinian women threatened with 'honor' killings and non-violent activists threatened with torture and murder for 'collaborating' with Israelis. It would also mean sitting in cafes In Jerusalem and escorting Israeli children to and from school in Tel Aviv. If we want a revolution, we must try to build it in the here and now.

Decades ago I was accused of romanticizing guerrilla struggles. Perhaps I have come to romanticize nonviolence. But ongoing reading on the topic, experimenting with non-violent resistance, leading workshops on nonviolence and creative dissent and talking with people from around the world that have been putting their lives on the line for social change who are still refusing to use violence against their opponents, has lead me to feel that only nonviolent resistance can be anti-hierarchical.

In this time of overwhelming urgency, from wars to environmental degradation to continued racism, sexism and homophobia to hunger and homelessness, the need for action is obvious. But in our deliberations and considerations, let us not become like those we oppose. Instead, let us experiment with alternatives institutions and strategies and forms of relationships and decision making; let us advocate carnivals instead of conflict; let us all learn to say "NO!" when asked to co-operate with injustice and oppression; let us share in the risks by neither bearing arms or being silent.

As communities can engage in armed resistance for generations without giving up, surely we can also engaged in militant forms of non-violent, public, inclusive resistance for years if necessary. We will, like those that use violence, be subjected to harassment, arrests, jailings and the possibility of death. This is a reality with any movement for social change. But we won' t have to wait for the withering away of the state if we work in the here and now for the development of the type of world we' d like to see in place of the nation state, in place of all forms of hierarchical, institutional authorities.

And these alternatives will never come to birth if we mimic in the here and now those we oppose—and the use of violence is the most sincerest form of mimicry we can adapt. Political violence is not the scalpel that assists with a caesarean to ensure a successful but difficult birth. Rather, it is the dioxin that crosses the placenta and damages the potential for a new and joyous life. Note: This essay is strongly influenced by: Ackerman, Peter and Jack DuVall. *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Non-Violent Conflict*. St. Martin' s Press, New York 2000. Albert, David H. People Power: *Applying Nonviolence Theory*. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia 1985. Anderson, Shelley and Janet Larmore, ed. *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*. War Resisters International, London 1991. Bruckner, D. J. R., Seymour Chwast and Steven Heller. *Art Against War: 400 Years of Protest in Art*. Abbeville Press, New York 1997. Chapple, Christopher Key. *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth and Self in Asian Traditions*. State University of New York Press, Albany 1993. Harper, Clifford, Dennis Gould and Jeff Cloves, eds. *Visions of Poesy: An Anthology of 20th Century Anarchist Poetry*. Freedom Press, London 1994. Herngren, Per. *Path of Resistance*. Margaret Rainey, translator. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia 1993. Kropotkin, Peter. *Mutual Aid*, third edition. Introduction by Paul Avrich. Penguin Press, London 1972 Lynd, Staughton, ed. *Nonviolence in America: A Documentary History*. Bobbs-Merrill Company Ltd., New York 1966. Library of Congress Number 65-23010. MacQueen, Graeme, ed. *Unarmed Forces. Science for Peace*, Toronto 1992. Marshall, Peter. *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*. HarperCollins, London 1992. Martin, Brian. Strip the Experts. Freedom Press, London 1991.

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Some new changes are going down here at *Maximum Rocknroll*, and I just wanted keep all of ya'll up to date. First off I want to welcome Clara Ruth on as our new distribution coordinator. She's going to be moving into the house and taking over the responsibility of getting the zine into

stores, distros etc then into your grubby little hands and all the while making sure we get paid. A slightly thankless job, but one that is very very important. She's already been putting in sometime helping out around here—packing boxes, straightening out our UPS account, and trying to sort out my insane system of organization—which as Arwen can attest, is no small task. Personally I'm quite excited about this turn of events as, since our departure from Mordam, handling distribution—in addition to putting the zine together every month—has been a perpetual headache filled with fifteen hour work days, stomach pains from too much coffee and a diet consisting mostly of chips and salsa. This is not to say that I don't think it isn't worth it, but having a third person around will definitely make things a lot easier and less stressed out around the old compound. And just so you know we're still looking for more and better distribution just about everywhere you can think of, so if you do a distro—whether it be just selling a few zines at shows or selling hundreds out of a warehouse—please get in touch so we can set something up with you. Also if your local indie record, book, magazine, or whatever shop doesn't stock *MRR* please encourage them to do so, and if that doesn't work and you want the kids in your town to know more about the punk rock start selling them yourself. It's easy. It's called DIY.

Second item of news would be the recent postal increase, It seems as though the US postal service is hell bent on destroying the punk rock network through constantly jacking up it's post rates. Although we're not exactly sure of how much this is going to effect us as of right now, it is certain that it will in some way. Especially in regards to foreign postage rates, which I have a suspicion are about to go through the fucking roof, but I wouldn't know for certain as the Post Office has been very sneaky and clandestine in regards to releasing it's new foreign rates. Bastards! There are various means we've been considering in order to fight this potentially gigantic financial hit. One would be to raise our ad rates, which currently are some of the cheapest around—which is fine as we're not in this to make money—but if it means our survival then raise them we must. Another potential option would be to raise the cover price of the magazine from $3 (where it has been since January of 1997) to $3.50 or $4. We don't really want to do that either, but again if it is a matter of not being able to put out the zine, then it might have to be raised. We'd like a little feedback about this, so breakout your pen and paper, or send us an email and let us know what you think.

Another bit of excitement around here is that we're going to be starting up doing *Maximum Rocknroll* radio again very soon. For now it will be based on the internet as a downloadable audio file, which will be updated every week with a new show. The next step after that will be to find a local radio station to let us broadcast it, then eventually begin syndication all over the country and hopefully the globe. Many thanks to Paul Curran for getting the ball rolling on this one. There should be more info on this next month, so keep your eyes peeled for an update and also details in regards to helping out with syndication in your home town.

We've been getting orders for the photozine, and I just wanted to let you all know what is going on with it—as it has been delayed. Two reasons. One, we haven't received a distributor check in nearly five months, which means we've been surviving purely on ad revenue and savings, which is enough, and we're doing fine, but it doesn't leave too much cash for extra projects right now. The other reason being that we just got a new influx of amazing photographs which means more decisions about what to and not to include. No worries though, because the distro money is starting to come in now and the construction with all the new images has commenced—so be on the lookout for it by the end of summer. Thanks for your patience.

I just got back from this pretty inspiring show here in San Francisco. It wasn't so much the bands that played, though they were excellent, but more so the mood of cooperation and community that was pervasive throughout the night. It was amazing really. The bands needed an all ages show on week night, which if you know anything about San Francisco, you know that is nearly an impossible thing to do. Rather than just throw up their hands in a whining fit of "it can't be done," the punx instead took over an abandoned building, switched on the power, turned on the water, handed out flyers and just did it. Hundreds of kids showed up, and while the alcohol flowed inside and the bands rocked, from outside of the squat you wouldn't know there was a show going on, save the muffled sound of the rock contained within. People brought food for everyone and someone even supplied a top notch P.A. system without even being asked. The place just seemed to buzz with old friendships being renewed and new friendships being founded. It was an amazing thing, and the sort of thing you don't ever get from going to bar show after bar show. I'm not going to name those involved in constructing this event for obvious legal reasons, but they know who they are, and I thank them. Let's hope we see more of the same, not only in this town but across the country. Don't like what's going on in your town, then make stuff happen. No place to do shows? Make a place to do shows. No good bands? Start your own band! Don't just sit around dreaming about the day the next super-hyped or cool band comes to town, just get out there and make things happen!

Endnotes:

1) Soundtrack to putting this issue together: DEFIANCE *No Future, No Hope* LP, SUBHUMANS (from Canaduh) *Incorrect Thoughts* LP, CROSSED OUT discography LP, PROLETARIAT *Indifference* LP, BAD RELIGION *Suffer* LP, BIG BOYS *Lullabies Help The Brain Grow* LP and SLIME first LP.

2) Please, please, please keep in mind that if you aren't seeing interviews with bands you like in *MRR*, then by all means do one with them and submit it. *MRR* is a contributor based publication, and it is what you, the readers make it. So quit your whining and get off your ass and do something for once in your life.

3) I'd really like to see an increase in scene reports coming in, so get to work kids and tell us about what is going on in your town. I'm really interested in getting a network of regular scene reporters going across the globe so if you are interested, get in touch.

4) I'm still trying to get a copy of the SNOBS first EP…you got one? I want it!

4.5) Could people stop sending Arwen creepy stalker-esque letters? Just cause she's a girl and enjoys getting busy from time to time does not mean she wants to get busy with you. If you have an impulsive need to send these sorts of letters, please write them to me, but be sure to include a photo so I can properly ridicule you when Floyd comes over drunk out of his mind, yelling at me for not liking enough pop punk. Silly Floyd.

5) "…we're not in it to lose…fuck you!" That thought courtesy of THE BIG BOYS. You should listen to them almost daily. You're life will be better for doing so.

6) Writing letters is a lost art. You can send me letters and copies of the ÄPÄRÄT EP to the *MRR* PO Box, or you can email me at mikethorn@mindspring.com.

GEORGE W. BUSH: SLIPPERY SLOPE CASE STUDY

6-20-02-C

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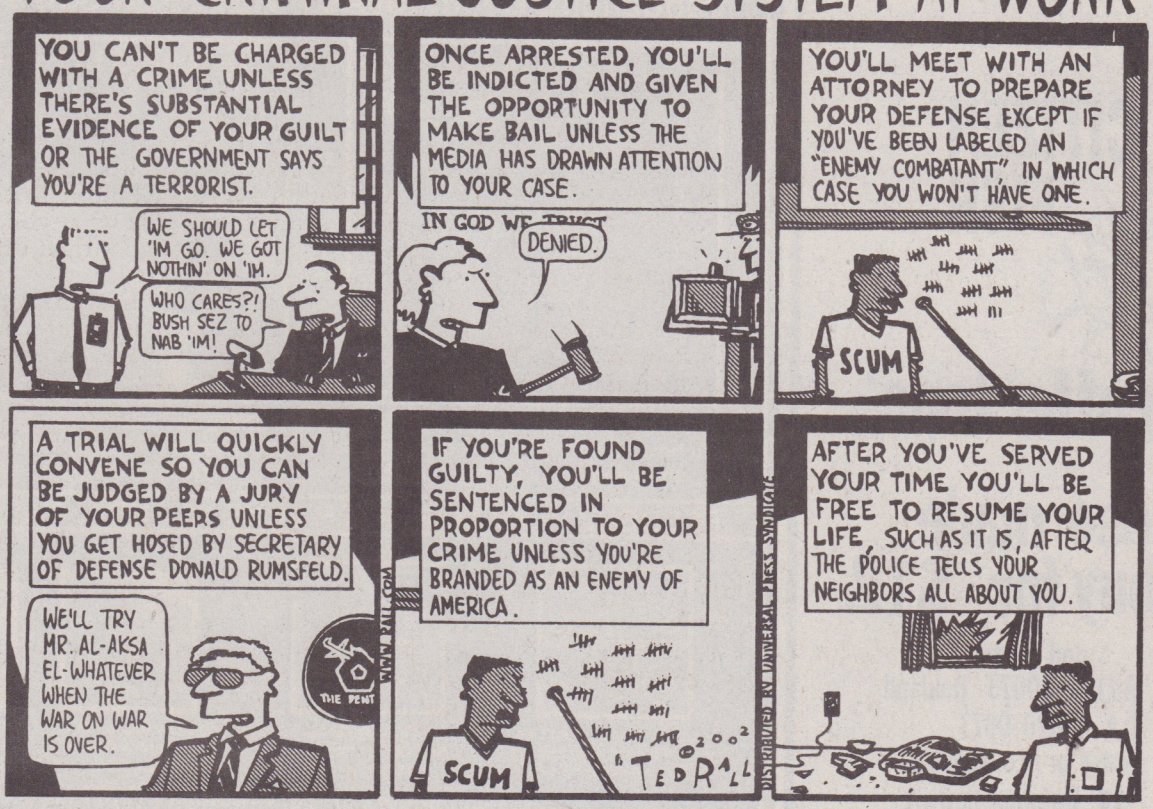

6-20-02-B

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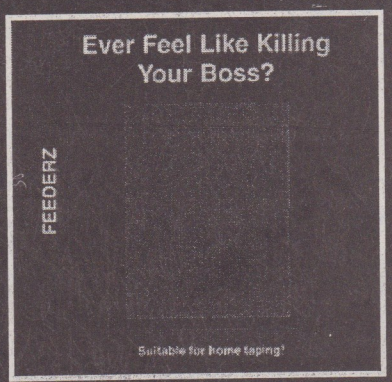

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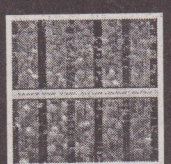

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EURO-SUMMER TOUR 2002

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Arwen Curry

TORTURE ADVOCATES DEFY U.S., INTERNATIONAL LAW

Pro-Pain Pundits

By Steve Rendall

After suggesting in a November 5 column that the US consider subjecting terror suspects to torture, *Newsweek's* Jonathan Alter is trying to change his story.

Responding to a critical letter to the editor in Newsweek's November 19 issue, Alter claimed, "At both the beginning and the end of my column, I wrote that I oppose legalizing physical torture."

Alter's column did say that legalizing physical torture wouldn't work in the US Instead, he suggested we consider using "legal" forms of psychological torture at home, while "transferring some suspects to our less squeamish allies." In other words, send them overseas for the real thing.

That may sound like a distinction without a difference, but apparently Alter believes that getting others to commit crimes against humanity on your behalf gets you off the hook, legally and morally.

It doesn't. Torture is illegal under both international and US law. In signing the Convention Against Torture in 1994, the US bound itself to oppose torture overseas and at home. Article 4 of the Convention obligates all state parties to ensure that all acts of torture are criminal offenses under domestic legislation. And even if the US had not signed the Convention, it would still be subject to customary international laws forbidding torture. According to Human Rights Watch, violations of such laws are "subject to universal jurisdiction, meaning that any state can exercise its jurisdiction, regardless of where the crime took place, the nationality of the perpetrator or the nationality of the victim" ("The Legal Prohibition Against Torture," www.hrw.org).

Sending suspects abroad to be tortured? Again, it's illegal all around. In addition to the Convention Against Torture, which expressly forbids sending a person anywhere "where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture," US statutory law prohibits transporting persons for torture. Citing Title 18, Section 242 of the United States Code, legal writer Karen L. Snell notes (*The Recorder,* 10/31/01): "The use of pressure tactics, including torture by proxy, not only renders evidence obtained inadmissible in court. It's also a crime. And it is not just the person who physically or mentally assaults a suspect who is guilty. Any person who aids, abets, counsels or conspires to commit such acts is a criminal."

And what about psychological torture? International law makes little distinction between physical and psychological torture. Article 1 of the Convention defines torture as "any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession."

Pro-torture parade

Alter is only one of several pundits who seemed compelled to advocate torture in various forms—regardless of US or international law.

In the November 8 Los Angeles Times, legal scholar and columnist Alan Dershowitz suggested that torture is not unconstitutional—as long as "the fruits of such techniques" are not used against the subject in a criminal trial, since that would violate the subject's Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. Because torture is not unconstitutional and just may be necessary in extreme cases, argues Dershowitz, it ought to be supervised by special judge-administered "torture warrants."

Dershowitz's narrow legalistic argument fails to address other constitutional protections against torture routinely cited by legal scholars (not to mention statutory prohibitions against torture found in international and US laws). In fact, US courts have found constitutional protections against torture not only in the right against self-incrimination, but also in the Fourth Amendment's prohibition on unreasonable search or seizure, the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel or unusual punishment, and the Fifth and the Fourteenth Amendments' guarantees of due process ("The Legal Prohibition Against Torture, www.hrw.org).

No pretensions to legal scholarship attended the pro-torture shoutfest that took place on the McLaughlin Group's November 9 show, where four out of five of the panelists endorsed torture. The Washington Times' Tony Blankley and MSNBC's Laurence O'Donnell joined host John McLaughlin and National Review editor Rich Lowry in approval of torture. Only Newsweek's Eleanor Clift objected. (When Clift asked her co-panelists where they would send suspects for torture, McLaughlin shouted, "The Filipinos!" while Lowry barked, "The Turks!")

On October 26 CNN news anchor Paula Zahn pressed Philadelphia police commissioner John Timoney, trying to get him to endorse extra-legal means in the case of terror suspects. When she asked him if "beatings" might be appropriate, Timoney stood his ground: "No. No. This is America, you know." A day later on CNN's Crossfire (10/27/01), conservative Tucker Carlson was succinct: "Torture is bad. Keep in mind, some things are worse. And under certain circumstances, it may be the lesser of two evils. Because some evils are pretty evil."

Yes, they are. That's why torture is considered a crime against humanity, and why no exceptions are provided for it in the Convention, which reads: "No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture."

Unreliable confessions

On the Wall Street Journal's editorial page (10/25/01), historian Jay Winik cited a case in which Philippine authorities tortured a suspected terrorist, reportedly thwarting plans to crash US jetliners. Without technically endorsing torture, Winik mused, "One wonders, of course, what would have happened if [the terrorist] had been in American custody?"

This evident confidence in the efficacy of torture seems to be shared by many pro-torture pundits, though as Human Rights Watch points out, "the unreliability of forced confessions was one of the principal reasons that US courts originally prohibited their use." As early as the 18th Century, political philosopher Cesare Beccaria warned that the victim of torture "will accuse himself of crimes of which he is innocent" (and will falsely implicate others "yet more readily"). Former FBI official Oliver Revell concurs: "People will even admit they killed their grandmother, just to stop the beatings" ("The Legal Prohibition Against Torture," www.hrw.org).

One remarkable thing about the recent interest in torture is that it comes almost entirely from pundits—virtually no politicians, federal officials or law enforcement agents have come forward to say that torture was a tool they needed. One exception was found in an October 21 Washington Post news article, in which unnamed FBI officials expressed frustration at their inability to get information from four suspects they believed were linked to the September 11 attacks. One FBI agent told the Post, "We are known for humanitarian treatment, so basically we are stuck.... Usually there is some incentive, some angle to play, what you can do for them. But it could get to that spot where we could go to pressure....where we won't have a choice, and we are probably getting there."

According to a later *USA Today* article (12/7/01), however, "US agents now doubt that any of the more than 600 people who have been detained at one time or another in the September 11 probe actually was involved in the hijacking probe." If the pro-torture pundits had had their way, that's a conclusion that might have been reached only after torturing the detainees—or perhaps they could have been sent overseas to have false confessions wrung out of them.

COINTELPRO RIDES AGAIN

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson

At the same time that President Bush dumped the old 1970s guidelines that banned FBI spying on domestic organizations, he also solemnly swore to honor the Constitution and respect all freedoms. The new guidelines do anything but that.

They give the FBI carte blanche authority to surveil, and plant agents in churches, mosques and of course, political groups. It will permit FBI agents to ransack the Internet to hunt for potential subversives. They can do all this without having to show probable cause of criminal wronging. This again gives the FBI unbridled power to determine who and what groups and individuals it can target.

But in saying that giving the FBI complete freedom to spy won't jeopardize civil liberties, Bush either has no memory of why the 1970s guidelines were put in place or he truly believes that the war on terrorism must override the freedoms that he promises to respect. If the latter is the reason he has unleashed the FBI, Bush won't be any different than other recent presidents.

Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon claimed that the battle to nail domestic subversives, i.e. Communists, Socialists, black nationalists, Black Panthers and civil rights leaders, most notably Martin Luther King Jr., justified, bending, twisting, and ultimately breaking the law and violating civil liberties.

They winked and nodded as FBI director J. Edgar Hoover launched the super-secret, and blatantly illegal counter-intelligence COINTELPRO program that targeted thousands of innocent Americans during the 1960s. The mandate of the program, spelled out in one of the stacks of secret documents released by Senate investigators in 1976, was to "disrupt, misdirect, discredit, and neutralize" groups and individuals the FBI considered politically objectionable. Those targeted in nearly all cases were not foreign spies, terrorists, or individuals suspected of criminal acts.

The FBI patterned COINTELPRO on the methods used by its Counter-intelligence Division and Internal Security Sections during the 1940'sand 1950s. The aim then was to bag spies, saboteurs and individuals and groups that advocated overthrowing the government. The arsenal of dirty tactics included non-court authorized wiretaps, undercover plants, agent provocateurs, poison pen letters, black bag jobs, and the compiling of secret dossiers.

Driven by a grotesque mix of personal racism and paranoia, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover kicked the program into high gear in the 1960s. The FBI assembled thousands of "ghetto informants" and hundreds of FBI agents in a deadly national campaign to harass and intimidate African-American groups. The FBI listed the individuals targeted under categories variously called, "Rabble Rouser Index," "Agitator Index," and the "Security Index."

The results were immediate and devastating. Thousands were expelled from schools, lost jobs, evicted from their homes, and offices, and publicly slandered. Few of these individuals were indicted, convicted or even accused of any crimes. FBI documents released in 1976 revealed that the agency devoted less than twenty percent of its spy activities to organized crime, solving bank robberies, murders, rapes and interstate theft. More than half of its spy targets were political organizations.

Hoover gave local FBI offices wide discretion to pick and choose their targets, and the tactics they could use. The new guidelines, like the old FBI spy campaign, gives local agents the same wide discretion to determine what groups or individuals it can investigate and what tactics they can use to investigate them.

With the death of Hoover in 1972 and congressional disclosure of the illegal program, the Justice Department publicly assured that COINTELPRO was a thing of the past and that it had implemented ironclad control over FBI activities. It didn't.

During the 1980s, the FBI waged a five-year covert spy campaign against dozens of religious and pacifist groups and leaders that opposed American foreign policy in Central America. In the 1990s it mounted covert campaigns against civil rights, environmental, and Native American, anti-nuclear disarmament groups, and Arab-American groups. The FBI tactics used against these groups were an exact repeat of the tactics that the 1970s guidelines supposedly banned.

Attorney-General John Ashcroft says that the FBI will not use its restored powers to wage war on law-abiding groups, or maintain illicit files and dossiers on prominent citizens. But FBI officials said the same thing during the 1960s. Then, as now, those in the press, and the few liberal Democrats that occasionally questioned FBI abuses, had to accept their denials. No government agency in those days would dare attempt to compel the FBI to proof it didn't illegally spy. In the current climate of political fear, it remains to be seen if Congressional agencies will be any more diligent in their oversight of the FBI this time around.

Bush says that scrapping the old ban on FBI spying will give the FBI tools to defeat terrorism. But if the past is any indication, the enemies of the state can be just about any and everyone FBI agents finger. And despite Bush's promises to respect the Constitution, who can or will dispute them?

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and columnist. Visit his news and opinion website: thehutchinsonreport.com. He is the author of The Crisis in Black and Black (Middle Passage Press).

A Changed President—or a New Repression?

reprinted from www.fair.org

President Bush's June 14 commencement address at Ohio State University was a sign of a "revived" presidency, according to *Washington Post* reporter Dana Milbank. "Bush basked in the adulation of 55,000 people who treated him to waves of standing ovations in Ohio Stadium as he received an honorary doctorate," according to the paper (6/15/02). "If there was a protest in the stadium, it was not visible to reporters."

In contrast, wrote Milbank, when Bush received an honorary degree last year from Yale University, "he was booed, heckled and greeted with a sea of protest signs." While pointing out that Yale and Ohio State are different places, the Post reporter asserted that "the real cause of the difference in reception is the transformation of Bush and his presidency since the September 11 terrorist attacks."

There may have been no protests visible to the Post reporter, but, as other media reported, there may have been other reasons for this in addition to "adulation" for Bush. According to the *Columbus Dispatch* (6/15/02), students were warned ahead of time they faced arrest if they showed any signs of dissent: "Graduates had been warned during rehearsal on Thursday that they faced arrest if—as was rumored—some stood up and turned their backs on Bush during his speech." The warning continued on the day of the event as well, according to the Associated Press (6/14/02): "Immediately before class members filed into the giant football stadium, an announcer instructed the crowd that all the university's speakers deserve to be treated with respect and that anyone demonstrating or heckling would be subject to expulsion and arrest." **

And some observers did, in fact, notice protests during the ceremony. As reported in *The Lantern* (6/14/02), Ohio State University's campus paper, "Three graduates and six audience members—one draped in a Palestinian flag—actually did turn their backs but were hardly noticed by the crowd of about 60,000." A demonstration held outside the stadium attracted a small group of protesters as well (Columbus Dispatch, 6/15/02).

None of this information made it into Milbank's report.

ACTION: Please contact the *Washington Post* and ask them why attempts to stifle dissent at George W. Bush's commencement address at Ohio State University were not newsworthy.

CONTACT: *Washington Post* Michael Getler, Ombudsman ombudsman@washpost.com (202) 334-7582

***NOTE: In the original version of this Action Alert, this quote from AP continued: "The announcer urged that Bush be greeted with a 'thunderous' ovation." But a subsequent version of the AP story indicated that ovation the announcer requested was for outgoing Ohio State president William Kirwan.*

Mexico reveals 'dirty war' files

By Nick Miles
BBC correspondent in Mexico City

The Mexican Government has opened millions of secret security files to shed light on human rights abuses of the past.

The files, covering cases from more than four decades up to 1985, include documents related to the torture and killing by security forces of hundreds of political activists.

Dealing with Mexico's extremely patchy human rights record was one of President Vicente Fox's key pledges when he came to power 18 months ago.

Fittingly, it was the president who made the announcement at a ceremony at the National Archives Centre in the capital.

"Whatever the consequences, we will clarify what went on and what abuses were carried out," he said.

Student massacre

Hundreds of people died and up to 500 went missing during campaigns by the Mexican security forces in the late 1960s and 70s.

The government at the time, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which ruled Mexico for seven straight decades, said they were carrying out legitimate actions against armed left-wing insurgents.

But witnesses, like those who were at the shooting of up to 200 student demonstrators in Mexico City in 1968, claimed soldiers often opened fire without warning and in other instances, carried out extra-judicial killings.

It is not certain what will be done with the newly released documents.

But President Fox said his government would not shrink from prosecuting anybody, including former presidents.

He said he was after the truth and nothing more.

Arafat is Only Interested in Saving Himself

Published in the Independent/UK
by Edward Said

Six distinct calls for Palestinian reform and elections are being pressed now: five of them are, for Palestinian purposes, both useless and irrelevant. Sharon wants reform as a way of further disabling Palestinian national life. The United States wants reform principally as a way of combating "terrorism," a panacea of a word that takes no account of history, context, or anything else.

Third is the Arab leaders' demand which, as far as I can tell, is a combination of several different elements, none of them directly helpful to the Palestinians themselves. Fourth in the chorus of reform are the Europeans. But they only scurry around sending emissaries to Sharon and Arafat, make ringing declarations in Brussels, fund a few projects – and more or less leave it at that.

Then there is Yasser Arafat and his circle of associates, who have suddenly discovered the virtues (theoretically at least) of democracy and reform. I know that I speak at a great distance from the field of struggle, and I also know all the arguments about the besieged Arafat as a potent symbol of Palestinian resistance against Israeli aggression, but I have come to a point where I think none of that has any meaning any more.
Arafat is simply interested in saving himself. He has had almost 10 years of freedom to run a petty kingdom, and has succeeded essentially in bringing opprobrium and scorn on himself and most of his team. Why anyone for a moment believes that at this stage he is capable of anything different, or that his new streamlined cabinet (dominated by the same old faces of defeat and incompetence) is going to produce actual reform, simply defies reason.

Finally there is the Palestinian people, who are now justifiably clamoring both for reform and elections. As far as I am concerned, this clamor is the only legitimate one of the six I have outlined here. It's important to point out that Arafat's present administration, as well as the Legislative Council, have overstayed their original term, which should have ended with a new round of elections in 1999. Moreover, the whole basis of the 1996 elections was the Oslo accords, which in effect simply licensed Arafat and his people to run bits of the West Bank and Gaza for the Israelis, without true sovereignty or security. Any attempt to go forward on that kind of platform is simply a wasteful ploy.

What then is to be done if the old basis of Palestinian legitimacy no longer really exists?

The major interests in Palestinian society, those that have kept life going, from the trade unions to health workers, teachers, farmers, lawyers, doctors, in addition to all the many NGOs, must now become the basis on which Palestinian reform – despite Israel's incursions and the occupation – is to be constructed. It seems to me useless to wait for Arafat, or Europe, or the US, or the Arabs to do this: it must absolutely be done by Palestinians themselves by way of a Constituent Assembly that contains all major elements of Palestinian society.

It must keep Palestinian life going in an orderly way with full participation for all concerned. It should also choose an emergency executive committee whose mandate is to end the occupation, not negotiate with it. It is quite obvious that militarily we are no match for Israel. What is needed is a creative method of struggle that mobilizes all the human resources at our disposal to highlight, isolate and gradually make untenable the main aspects of Israeli occupation, e.g. settlements, settlement roads, roadblocks and house demolitions.

For such a Palestinian strategy to work there has to be an Israeli component made up of individuals and groups with whom a common basis of struggle against occupation can, and indeed must, be established. This is the great lesson of the South African struggle: that it proposed the vision of a multiracial society from which neither individuals nor groups and leaders were ever deflected. The only vision coming out of Israel today is violence, forcible separation and the continued subordination of Palestinians to an idea of Jewish supremacy. Not every Israeli believes in these things, of course, but it must be up to us to project the idea of coexistence in two states that have natural relations with each other on the basis of sovereignty and equality.

We have never faced a worse or, at the same time, a more seminal moment. The Arab order is in total disarray; the US administration is effectively controlled by the Christian right and the Israeli lobby, and our society has been nearly wrecked by poor leadership and the insanity of thinking that suicide bombing will lead directly to an Islamic Palestinian state. There is always hope for the future, but one has to able to look for it and find it in the right place. It is quite clear that in the absence of any serious Palestinian or Arab information policy in the United States (especially in Congress), we cannot for a moment delude ourselves that Powell and Bush are about to set a real agenda for Palestinian rehabilitation. That's why I keep saying that the effort must come from us, by us, for us.

Who else but the Palestinian people can construct the legitimacy they need to rule themselves and fight the occupation with weapons that don't kill innocents and lose us more support than ever before?

The writer is Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University, New York

INTELLECTUALS APPEAL TO HALT EUROPEAN NATIONALISM

by Ray Furlong
Published by the BBC

A group of 25 European intellectuals has issued an appeal calling on politicians to take a stand against nationalist rhetoric.

The group includes the German writer Guenter Grass, the veteran French radical Daniel Cohn-Bendit and the Bishop of Prague.

The appeal comes after months of heated rows connected with the expulsions of ethnic Germans in the region at the end of World War II.

But with elections still to come in Germany and Slovakia, the disputes will probably remain sensitive for at least a few months yet.

Distinguished list

The list of signatories for the appeal reads like an intellectual Who's Who of Central Europe, including leading Hungarian writers and former Polish dissidents. The Catholic Church is represented by an Austrian cardinal and the Bishop of Prague, Vaclav Maly, one of the leading figures of the 1989 Velvet Revolution.

The appeal is a response to the increasing use of nationalist rhetoric by politicians across Central Europe in the past several months, which have soured relations in the region.

Leaders in Germany, Austria and Hungary have been calling for compensation for their citizens who were expelled from Czechoslovakia after World War II, often using emotional and inflammatory language.

The Czechs and Slovaks have responded with strong words of their own. Elections have added to the intensity of the rhetoric on all sides.

This appeal warns that just as the doors of the European Union are opening for the region, voices can be heard reviving the traumas of past wars and re-opening old wounds.

It calls on politicians, both in their home countries and abroad, to make a stand against this.

The signatories also plan a conference to discuss these issues, but whether they will have any effect is hard to say.

CHAVEZ DEFIANT IN FACE OF PROTESTS

BBC

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has warned against fresh attempts to topple his government as police arrested a retired colonel who led a march against him through the capital, Caracas.

Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello said Hidalgo Valero was held on charges of unauthorised use of his army uniform, which he wore at a news conference on Wednesday where he called for the anti-Chavez protest.

Thousands of people took to the streets to demand the president's resignation.

Scores of officers were forced into retirement, and senior officers replaced by lower-ranking officers, as Chavez opponents were purged from the ranks following an attempted military coup in April.

The retired officers marched with their uniforms on hangers, showing their solidarity with the officers accused of involvement in the coup and demanding an end to what they call the use of the military for political aims.

While Chavez opponents chanted "out, you communist"—referring to the president—and called for civil disobedience, supporters cried "out with the coup supporters!" and "no fascism!"

The populist president addressed thousands of supporters in a shanty town, urging them to defend his self-proclaimed "revolution" in face of the protesters.

Military discontent

Since anti-government demonstrations in April left 17 people dead—and led to Mr Chavez being ousted for 48 hours by rebel officers—Venezuela has lived in a state of heightened tension.

With rumours of another possible coup circulating daily in Caracas, analysts say Thursday's march on the presidential palace could be another potential spark for violence.

There had been fears pro-Chavez supporters—grouped in the controversial Bolivarian Circles—may attack the protesters during the march.

The groups are a point of contention between the president and many in the military.

The government says the circles are not armed, but the opposition says they are militia groups and that they instigated the violence in April.

An investigation into the deaths has yet to be made public, and opponents say it cannot be impartial, because it has been led by an attorney-general loyal to Mr Chavez.

Military analysts say discontent within an already divided armed forces has been worsened by the government's purge of officers involved in the coup.

With the next round of military promotions due on 5 July, Hidalgo Valero said merit, not politics, should deter-

SEATTLE MAN FACES FINES, PRISON AFTER TAKING MEDICINES TO IRAQ

by Gina Kim
Reprinted from the Seattle Times

For Bert Sacks, traveling to Iraq isn't a question of breaking the law—it's a question of right and wrong.

And not paying a $10,000 fine for a policy he believes is killing innocent children is simply staying that course.

"Where was the world when the Jews were being killed at Auschwitz? ... Well, sanctions kill. No one can deny that thousands of children are dying," said the 60-year-old Seattle resident. "Where is the world?"

Defying the US government, the retired software engineer traveled to Iraq in 1997 and delivered $40,000 worth of antibiotics, aspirin and cough medicine. A year later, he received a letter from the US Treasury Department alleging he'd violated US law by spending money on travel expenses while in Iraq.

Last month, after his eighth trip to Iraq, Sacks received a letter stating he had 30 days to pay.

But he doesn't plan to pay a cent. Yesterday, he personally delivered a letter to a Treasury office in Washington, DC, outlining why.

Sacks believes he has every right to take medical supplies to those who need it. And he believes it's unconstitutional to fine him without giving him a court hearing.

He said his stance stems from years of research on the effects of the US and U.N. embargo on the Iraqi people: Many don't have access to potable drinking water. Raw sewage is dumped in the rivers. Diarrhea cases are rampant.

Sacks blames the sanctions, imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. He said Iraq is unable to get materials to repair or rebuild water- and sewage-treatment plants destroyed during Iraq's 1980s war with Iran and during the Persian Gulf War.

A 1999 United Nations Children's Fund report blames the sanctions for killing half a million children younger than five over seven years.

But according to the US State Department's Web site, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's failure to implement policies to boost economic growth and improve living standards is the reason for the country's economic woes. And Saddam's refusal to allow weapons inspectors into the country keeps the sanctions in place.

A Treasury Department spokesman wouldn't comment on the specifics of the agency's probe of Sacks, but he said the fine could be garnisheed from any wages Sacks might have.

The threat of being fined even more—up to $275,000—for his trips or sentenced to 12 years in jail and given $1 million in criminal penalties doesn't rock Sacks' resolve.

"I hope Americans will realize what policy our government is pursuing. And if that means the threat of court, I will do that," said Sacks. "I hope to educate Americans as to what we're doing."

June Jordan Dies

A Great Poet, Beloved Teacher, Tireless Fighter for Justice, A Woman of Profound Consequence

June Jordan died on June 14th, 2002. She fought a long, courageous battle with cancer. A briliant, provocative poet and political activist, Jordan continued to write and edit even in the final months. She was America's most published African American author.

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FBI Roundup Brings More Drug War Funds

Philip Smith, DRCNet

Last week, DRCNet reported on the FBI's revamping in the wake of mounting concern over its performance in the events leading up to September 11 (www.drcnet.org/wol/239/html#fbi). The beleaguered agency transferred more than 400 agents assigned to drug investigations, but it did not end its drug war role. While major overhauls of the nation's intelligence infrastructure underway at press time make any numbers subject to sudden change, at last count, the FBI still had more than 2,000 agents assigned to the drug war, compared to 1,100 assigned to terrorism before September 11 and the 2,600 proposed by FBI Director Robert Mueller last week.

But that hasn't stopped drug-fightin' yet—quick thinking law enforcement officials from beginning to holler that they'll need even more money to take up the slack. DEA director Asa Hutchinson was the first to hint at a new trip to the public trough. "Additional resources" may be necessary, he said in a prepared statement last week. "These are issues we will discuss to ensure the DEA has all the necessary tools to continue doing our job well," said Hutchinson, whose 4,600 special agents arrested 30,000 people last year with a budget of $1.8 billion.

This week, other law enforcers began to follow Hutchinson's lead, and at least one leading border newspaper echoed the call. Broward County, FL, Sheriff Ken Jenne told the Associated Press the loss of the FBI narcs will leave "a gaping hole" in his county's anti-drug effort.

"Now that the FBI is going to be focused on its core mission of terrorism, I'm wondering how our state and local agencies are going to deal with motorcycle gangs, narcotics trafficking and white-collar crime," added Washington State Patrol Chief Ronal Serpas.

Chicago Mayor Richard Daley (D) told the Chicago Tribune that the FBI move would hurt the city. Drug dealers are terrorists, the mayor added.

Downstate in Peoria County, Sheriff Chuck Schofield told the AP the Bureau provided critical support for gang and drug enforcement. "I know they have big responsibilities, but I'd hate to have the relationship affected," he said. And across the state in Rockford, Police Chief Jeff Nielsen complained that the move would mean fewer arrests on big drug cases. "While you wish they didn't have to [pull agents], you understand," Nielsen said. "If a slightly lower arrest rate means they have a higher arrest rate in terrorism, that's good."

While law enforcement officials now are limiting their comments to the impact the FBI reshuffling will have on their ability to fight the drug menace, it won't take long until the other shoe drops. In an editorial this week, the El Paso Times fired the opening salvo. Citing the FBI move and arguing that drug smuggling groups will respond with "renewed and reinvigorated efforts to ply their trade," the Times made a clarion call for more anti-drug spending. "This puts additional pressure on other agencies, from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration to the county Sheriff's Department," editorialized the Times. More of the pursuit of drug-related crime will fall to them. They must be given the resources and training necessary to do the job and keep the fight against drugs at a high level."

But with the federal and most state governments running in the red and cutting programs, calls for more, ever more drug war are bound to be resisted. Battle lines will be drawn around next year's budgets, as health care, public safety and education—not to mention the "war on terrorism"—compete with the drug war for taxpayer dollars.

Activists Win in Judi Bari vs FBI trial

by Karen Pickett, Steve Christianson
media@judibari.org

OAKLAND,CA—The jury in the Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney federal civil rights lawsuit against four FBI agents and three Oakland Police officers awarded plaintiffs $4.4 million for violation of the activists' Constitutional rights and returned a verdict largely in favor of Earth First! activists Cherney and the late Judi Bari. In a legal victory of historic proportions against the FBI, the jury found that six of the seven defendants violated the First and Fouth Amendments of the Constitution by arresting the activists, conducting searches of their homes, and carrying out a smear campaign in the press, calling Earth First! a terrorist organization and calling the activists bombers, in the aftermath of the explosion of a bomb that was planted in Judi Bari's car in 1990. This verdict finds unlawful the actions of those in charge of the bombing investigation, and vindicates Bari and Cherney.

FBI agents Frank Doyle, John Reikes, Philip Sena and OPD officer Mike Sims were found to have violated Bari and Cherney's First Amendment rights. In addition, OPD officer Sitterud was found to have violated Cherney's First Amendment rights. Doyle was found to have violated Bari's Fourth Amendment rights related to the search of her home, and Doyle and OPD officer Chenault were found to have violated Cherney's Fourth Amendment rights. FBI agent Doyle and OPD officer Sims were found to have violated Bari's Fourth Amendment rights in relation to her arrest. The jury returned an "undecided" verdict with respect to violations of Cherney's Fourth Amendment rights for his arrest.

Frank Doyle was the agent in charge of the 1990 bomb scene, and taught an FBI bomb school at a Louisiana Pacific clearcut a month prior to the bombing. Doyle was also the Squad 13 relief supervisor. Squad 13 was the joint terrorism squad made up of FBI and Oakland officers and collected extensive files on political groups in the Bay Area.

Reikes was the head of the FBI's terrorist squad who came to OPD headquarters the day of the bombing to give the inflammatory briefing on Earth First!

Sena was already engaged in a secret investigation of Earth First! and concocted a fake informant tip.

Sims was an OPD homicide lieutenant in charge of other officers investigating the bombing and the decision-maker for the unjust arrests of the activists.

Sitterud ignored evidence at the scene and concocted information that would implicate the activists. Chenault wrote the first fraudulent search warrant affidavit.

This verdict is a referendum against the FBI's gross interference with people's right to dissent at a time when Attorney General Ashcroft, FBI Director Mueller and the Bush administration are arrogating huge power to themselves and the FBI to spy on legitimate groups and organizers and infringe the Constitutional rights of the public. The filled-out verdict form is available at http://www.judibari.org
/third_verdict_form_final.pdf
www.judibari.org

Bush's Police State Kicks Into Gear

Ted Rall, AlterNet

The jackbooted thugs can arrest you without bothering to accuse you of a crime. They can deprive you of the right to make a phone call, to receive a visit from your family, or even to see a lawyer.

It doesn't matter if you're innocent or not; our state-sanctioned terrorists can keep you locked up in prison for the rest of your life without ever granting you your day in court. But you're an American citizen, you protest. It makes no difference whatsoever—you have no rights.

After cynically using the Sept. 11 attacks as a pretext to eradicate one civil liberty after another, the Bush Administration has finally taken away the single most essential freedom of an American citizen: the right to due process before a jury of his peers. Classifying 31-year-old Chicagoan Jose Padilla as an al-Qaeda associate and enemy combatant, Attorney General John Ashcroft authorized his transfer from a federal courthouse in New York City—where he had been held as a "material witness" on a customs violation since May 8—to indefinite military detention at the Charleston Naval Weapons Station in South Carolina.

Though not legally charged, Padilla (who changed his name to Abdullah al-Mujahir after converting to Islam) is accused of planning to build and detonate a non-nuclear "dirty" radioactive bomb, possibly in Washington, D.C. Government officials concede that they have no physical evidence against Padilla (bomb components, manuals, etc.). Their case, they admit, relies primarily on information from star canary Abu Zubaydah, an unsavory al-Qaeda operative whose Guantánamo debriefing sparked last month's flurry of warnings from Tom Ridge. Justice Department officials, an anonymous official told the *New York Times* on June 12, "concluded that they could not bring a winnable court prosecution, largely because the evidence against [Padilla] was derived from intelligence sources and other witnesses the government cannot or will not produce in court."

So much for the right to face your accuser.

Padilla theoretically faces prosecution under a military tribunal. (Back in November, Bush had promised that tribunals would only be used against foreigners.) But Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld says that even such kangaroo court justice is probably a long way off: "We're not interested in trying him at this moment."

Some officials say that detainees like Padilla and those being held in the Guantánamo dog pens need not be tried until the end of the "war on terror," which, according to Bush himself, could go on forever.

America may well be a safer place because Jose Padilla has "disappeared," to use the lexicon of Latin American death squads. But the manner in which this American has been stripped of his citizenship rights—to a lawyer, to a speedy trial, to apply for bail—is reminiscent of such totalitarian states as Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. What the Bushies are doing to Padilla is an outrage and it could happen to any of us.

The legal basis for this action is a twisted joke. "Citizens who associate themselves with the military arm of the enemy government, and with its aid, guidance and direction enter this country bent on hostile acts, are enemy belligerents," ruled the Supreme Court in a precedent-setting case in 1942.

The United States, however, is not at war. Congress has not declared war against the Taliban or anyone else. And while Padilla may indeed have plotted hostile acts at the behest of al-Qaeda, no one accuses him of belonging to the Taliban army. How could they? The Bushies denied P.O.W. status under the Geneva conventions to Guantánamo inmates by arguing that the Taliban never had an army.

The war on terror, like the war on drugs, isn't a state of combat. It's an advertising slogan. The bombing campaign against Afghanistan is, at most, a police action. And while there are undoubtedly organizations like al-Qaeda that hate the US and mean harm to Americans, there is no legal basis for denaturalizing Americans merely because they're accused of belonging to such groups.

Ironically, this vile assault on essential American rights comes on the heels of what seems to be a previous Bush Administration abuse of Padilla's rights—he was jailed in New York for a month without being charged with a crime. Ruling in a different case, New York federal judge Shira Scheindlin recently wrote that "Relying on the material witness statute to detain people who are presumed innocent under our Constitution in order to prevent potential crimes is an illegitimate use of the statute." That ruling may have inspired Padilla's transfer to the South Carolina military lockup.

You're probably not all that troubled about what happens to Padilla. You haven't hung out with Islamic extremists, boned up on your bomb-making skills or fantasized about Chernobylizing the Washington Mall. But don't forget: A court of law hasn't proved that Jose Padilla did either. And if George W. Bush has his way, it never will.

Ted Rall's new book, a graphic travelogue about the Afghan war titled To *Afghanistan and Back,* is out now. For info visit nbmpub.com.

"War on Terrorism" Winking at Nuclear Terror

By Norman Solomon

Two countries—each with dozens of atomic bombs—are threatening to make war on each other. Large numbers of troops have mobilized. Deadly cross-border clashes are intense. And people in charge of both governments have become more bellicose by the day.

Maybe you think this situation calls for US officials and American media outlets to focus on ways of preventing the outbreak of a war that could quickly turn into a nuclear conflagration. If so, your mode of thinking is distinctly out of step with the "war on terrorism."

You see, as the summer of 2002 begins, what matters most is the Pentagon's determination to kill as many Al Qaeda fighters as possible. Some of them are located in parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and perhaps also Kashmir, the region that's under bitter dispute by Indiaand Pakistan.

Since the leaders in New Delhi and Islamabad have their fingers on nuclear buttons, their escalating threats ought to concentrate our minds on the very real perils of the situation. An attack with a single 10-kilo ton atomic warhead could cause immediate deaths numbering in the hundreds of thousands. For starters. "American intelligence estimates put the toll in the event of a full exchange of the two nuclear arsenals at 12 million dead with maybe 7 million wounded—an instant slaughter unprecedented in the history of mankind," Henry Porter wrote in the London-based *Guardian.*

Such figures, applied to human carnage, may be impossible to grasp. You might think of the World Trade Center catastrophe occurring simultaneously about 4,000 times (leaving aside widespread radiation sickness and longer-term agonies). Such comparisons may beneeded to galvanize much attention from the US media, still transfixed as it is with stories related to 9/11.

By now, America's "war on terrorism" often seems to be a war of narcissism. The world view is so extremely self-engrossed—and so widely accepted by news media—that the movers and shakers of the Fourth Estate usually don't bat an eye even when rationales get positively loopy.

There was a remarkably myopic—no, let's not beat around the bush—there was a remarkably deranged moment on May 28 when Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke voiced concern about the

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increasing chances of war between the two nuclear-armed states. Why? Because, in order to confront India with additional ground forces, Pakistan was about to pull troops away from its border with Afghanistan and thus weaken efforts against Al Qaeda and Taliban soldiers.

Noting that Pakistani troops at the Afghan border have been "enormously, enormously helpful" to the US government, Clarke worried aloud. "Attention and troops that cannot be focused there because they're focused elsewhere, that's a concern for us because we need as much assistance as possible in guarding that very porous border," she said. Those comments didn't raise many eyebrows in America's newsrooms.

Hello? While events are rapidly careening in the direction of a war that could bring nuclear disaster to the Indian subcontinent, the Bush administration contends that a brake must be applied—because of the importance of killing Al Qaeda members this summer?

Like quite a few other regimes, the fanatical Hindu fundamentalists running India's government have echoed the US "war on terrorism" mantra to harmonize with their own militaristic intentions. While the Pentagon was complaining that a slippery slope to nuclear war between India and Pakistan would be inconvenient for Washington's policymakers, the Indian foreign minister employed a familiar lexicon. "The world recognizes that today the epicenter of international terrorism is in Pakistan," said Jaswant Singh. "Terrorists targeting not only India but other countries, too, receive support from state structures in Pakistan."

Although the consequences of any nuclear detonation in the conflict between India and Pakistan would be a horrific cataclysm, the predictable results are apt to get little advance media attention from major American outlets. In the current war of narcissism—despite all the self-congratulatory froth after Sept. 11 about the global vistas flung open by the newly enlightened US media—the news world still revolves largely around the USA and Washington's line of the day.

But perhaps, under the news-you-can-use category, some angles can grab appreciable coverage: If a faraway nuclear exchange takesplace, Americans who feel that Strontium-90 would not be appropriate for their current lifestyles should forget about consuming dairy products (that includes lattes and cappuccinos) for at least a few years. They would be wise to cultivate indoor gardens in a hurry. And they'd be well-advised to stay indoors with all windows tightly sealed.

Norman Solomon's books include *Killing Our Own: The Disaster of America's Experience with Atomic Radiation* (Delacorte Press), whichhe co-authored with Harvey Wasserman in 1982.

Police-FBI Roundups Not New

Earl Ofari Hutchinson

Civil libertarians hailed the recent decision by Portland police officials not to help the FBI indiscriminately grill Middle Eastern immigrants. Police officials in San Francisco, and Minneapolis though they did not flatly refuse to aid the FBI hunt still expressed deep unease about the pending round-up. There's a good reason they should.

The FBI has given no evidence that the more than 5000 individuals they seek to question have any ties to the September 11 terror attackers, have committed any crimes, or are in the country illegally. Attorney-General John Ashcroft has refused to give any assurance that the FBI's new round-up will bag more terrorists. Without that official assurance the at random questioning of Muslim immigrants smacks of racial profiling. The seed for the government ethnic targeting of Arab-Americans was planted in the 1960s. The ghetto riots that rocked hundreds of American cities triggered the first major escalation in police power. The 1968 Civil Rights Act gave police and federal agencies broader authority to conduct surveillance and wiretaps against groups and individuals considered a threat to national security. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, with the full blessing of President Lyndon Johnson, escalated its illegal, and super-secret counter-intelligence program, popularly known as COINTELPRO, specifically designed to harass, intimidate, and neutralize black militant groups.

In the 1970s, Congressional investigators probing Hoover's spy program marveled at its scope. From 1964 to 1969, the FBI assembled a small army of more than 7,500 "ghetto informants" (known) and hundreds of FBI agents in a deadly national campaign to name names and compile dossiers on thousands of African-Americans whom it claimed were connected with the Black Muslims, Black Panthers, and civil rights leaders and activists.

The FBI listed the individuals targeted for questioning and surveillance under categories variously called, "Rabble Rouser Index," "Agitator inde x," and the "Security Index." Individuals wound up on the FBI's security watch list if they attended a political meeting, donated a few dollars to a political group, or were rumored to be sympathetic toward political causes. What made the Portland police's refusal to aid and abet in the FBI's current political hunt astounding, though, is that police officials have routinely cooperated in past FBI stop, search and question campaigns against those whom they tag as racial or political subversives. A provision in the 1968 Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act made it even easier for the FBI to rope local police departments in on its political hunts. Congress kicked out $5 million to expand the police training programs at the FBI National Academy.

In 1969, the number of police in the program leaped from 200 to 2000. In the decades since then, police officials thousands of local and foreign police officials have received training in riot control, interrogation and intelligence gathering procedures the FBI academy.

During those years police departments in Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago, Detroit, and New York either established, or expanded, their "red squads" in cooperation with, or apart from the FBI, to collect information on thousands of individuals suspected of being sympathizers or supporters of militant political organizations. In 1970, Seattle police blew the cover on FBI-police political hunts when it publicly balked at aiding the FBI in a planned raid on local Panther offices. The FBI had produced no tangible proof that the group had committed any crimes.

Police officials in other cities will soon have to decide whether they will aid and abet the FBI in its hunt or follow the example of Portland police. Justice Dept. officials say they want to interview more than 600 persons all of Middle Eastern descent throughout the Midwest. They have notified them by letter that they will be questioned. The FBI has formally requested that a local police officer be present during the questioning.

But what if some of those targeted for questioning refuse to cooperate? Though they are not accused of committing any crimes, or having any links with the terror attackers, will FBI agents haul them in for questioning? And will police officials help them? If so, will the FBI detain them as they have hundreds of others with no charges against them and with only the shaky assurance from Ashcroft that they have access to attorneys, and are allowed visits from family and friends?

The search to ferret out those who belong to what Ashcroft calls "hidden terror cells" will escalate. Almost certainly hundreds more names will be added to the FBI's secret list of those it wants to question. And almost all of them will be Muslims.

The Portland police sent a strong message that they will not engage in the FBI's political fishing expedition that tramples on the civil rights of innocent individuals without some proof of wrongdoing. It's a message that other police departments should also send.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and columnist. Visit his news and opinion website: www.thehutchinsonreport.com

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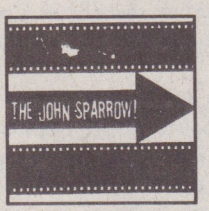

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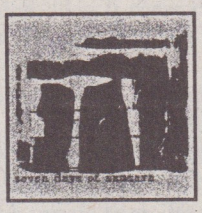

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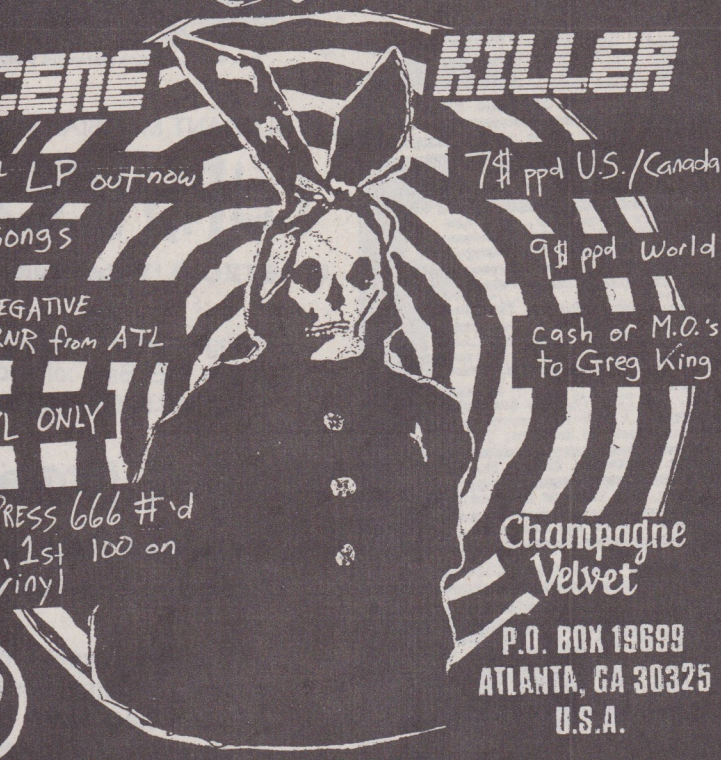

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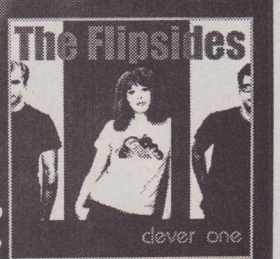

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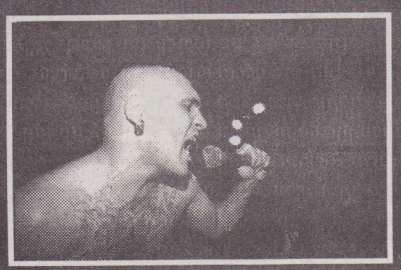

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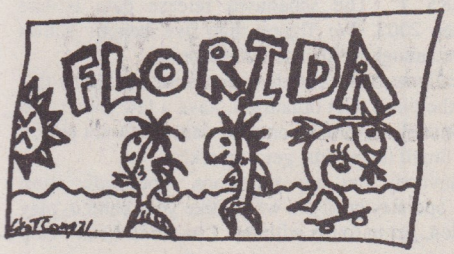


May 27, 2002—

Hello, everyone. Brandon, Florida is a suburb of Tampa. It is relatively clean, safe and friendly. I like it here. That's why I moved here almost eight years ago. That's why I'm staying and not moving to Minneapolis, New York, Portland, or whatever is the current punk rock Mecca. No disrespect to those awesome scenes, but I think it is more admirable to stay put and improve your local scene than to bail out and head for an established one.

I would like to tell you all about what we have going on in our area for a couple of reasons. Maybe this will inspire some of you in other small towns to get to work on your own scenes. And maybe it will entice some cool touring bands to head our way.

My record store, Sound Idea, is kind of the local punk hang out. The store does meager business at best. All I sell is punk and hardcore. People around here don't understand what a specialty store is. I lose about ten sales a day because I don't carry Korn, Backstreet Boys, and the soundtrack to *The Lion King*. But I don't care as long as I can pay the bills and for almost eight years, I have been able to. Sound Idea has a couple dozen devout customers who keep me going and that's great. I like being able to turn people on to cool music, to show them there's more to punk than MXPX. Last week Sam sold a Slipknot dude a Toxic Narcotic CD and the guy loved it. It is moments like those that make it all worth while. (I'm getting a little weepy now.)

At the urging of the Sound Idea crew, more and more kids have been getting turntables and discovering the joy of *vinyl*!

"There's so much good stuff that's only on vinyl," they exclaim, once they have made the conversion. Some have vowed never to buy CDs again. Sometimes it feels like missionary work, sometimes it feels like a lost cause. But those minor victories are sweet.

Most of the shows in Brandon are in the storage room of Sound Idea. In the last several months, Brandon has had shows by Nine Shocks Terror, Voorhees, DS-13, Vitamin X, Amdi Petersen's Arme, and Tear It Up. All of those bands had a great time and were paid well. More importantly, they played for a bunch of enthusiastic kids, many of whom had no previous exposure to true DIY punk. (For lots of kids around here, punk is the Warped Tour. Now at least a few of them have had a glimpse of the real deal.)

Touring bands, please keep small towns in mind when booking your tours. From my experience on the road, the best shows are in small towns—the kids appreciate it more. You might not earn as many "scene points" as playing the "cool club" in a major city, but you will have a great time and perhaps inspire a few isolated weirdos to pick up instruments. And if you need financial incentive, small town kids buy lots of t-shirts! Just ask Bread and Water about their first time in Brandon. Around here, they are as big as Metallica.

In addition to having touring bands a couple of times a month, we have free shows every Sunday at 3:00. The Sunday matinees are how most new, local bands get started. Just having a place to play has been motivation enough for many kids to give music their best shot. Yes, many of the bands are short-lived and some of them aren't very good, but at least they are doing something. Maybe there is a place in your town where you can do something like this a couple of times a month. Talk to small bars, restaurants, art galleries, etc. Maybe someone you know has a huge backyard. The hardest part in kickstarting a scene is having a steady venue. I've been fortunate to have nice neighbors and a landlord who is rarely seen.

So, let's talk about some of the bands and personalities making up the Brandon Scene.

We've got the Kelly brothers, Will and Steve, who have played in dozens of bands in the last couple of years. Steve is the best drummer in town, so he gets asked to play for every band. Steve is currently drumming in the thrash unit EIGHT MINUTES OF DESTRUCTION and

singing in THE BAD SEX PARTNERS, a kinda KBD-style band. Steve's also about the friendliest dude in town and makes new people feel welcome. I would like to clone Steve a few dozen times.

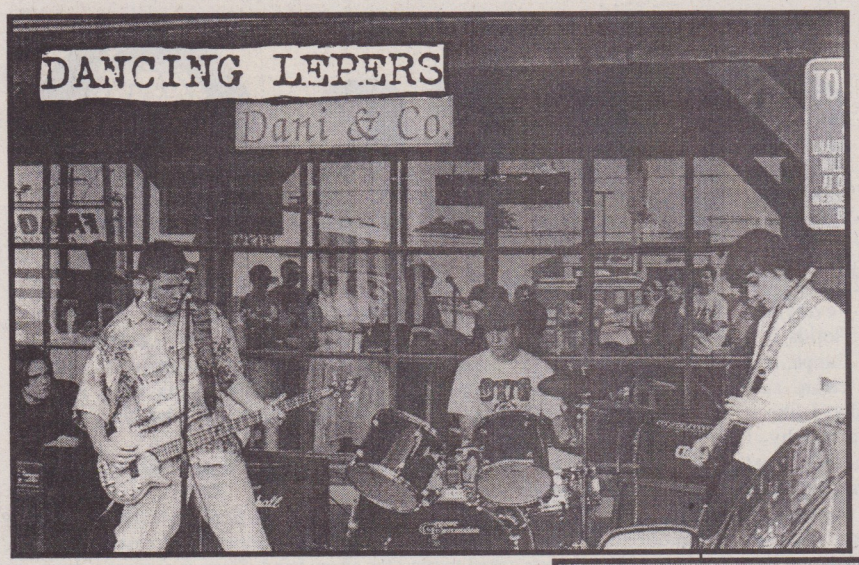
Will joins and quits bands at the drop of a hat, so no matter what I write about him, its going to be outdated before I finish typing this paragraph. Will was last known to be playing guitar in EIGHT MINUTES OF DESTRUCTION, but that was hours ago, so who knows what he's up to now.

Then there's the Watson bothers, Sam and Pete, who play in HANK EARL CARR AND THE EXPLODING STATE TROOPERS. (Hank Carr was a local cop killer.) The Watson boys have also formed a few side projects over the years, such as THE UNDERCOVERS, an all-punk cover band.

And we can't forget about the amazing bass playing Lynches: Pat, Brian and little sister Bridgett. If you need a bass player in Brandon, better call a Lynch to do the job. Bridgett has been trying to get an all-girl band off the ground for a while and it looks like they are getting on the right track now.

For what may be the first time in our area, there are a bunch of females getting involved in the scene. Emily Dwyer has been playing bass in EIGHT MINUTES OF DESTRUCTION, and has been learning guitar. Emily, Kelly and Kris have been photographing and videotaping almost every show. Some of the footage will be used for a video compilation.

From nearby Tampa are the DANCING LEPERS, one of the most popular bands in the area. I am really impressed by this band. Not only are they very young (15-16 years old) but they have been playing



their instruments for less than a year and are very good. Their original songs are great, sounding much like Dead Kennedys. While playing a Sunday matinee in April, the Lepers had a nifty surprise. Their hero, Jello Biafra, popped into Sound Idea for a little record shopping and stayed for the show. Jello was heard to say, "That guy sounds a little bit too much like me," and laughed. After their set, Jello approached them and complimented them on their playing. Those guys were on cloud nine! It was so cool. They have a couple of short demos. If you want to contact them, try ReelBigDrew@aol.com.

From down in Sarasota, about an hour away, is YOUTH OF NAUSEA, who take their name from a line in a Rudimentary Peni song. Here's another young band. Like the DANCING LEPERS, they have not been playing long, but are quite good. YON reminds me a lot of Toxic Narcotic and Filth. Their music is political and the guys are very sincere. YON plays in Sarasota once in a while, but they prefer the Brandon crowd. They have a great CD-R demo that you can get by sending a few bucks to: Youth Of Nausea, 5331 Fox Run Way, Sarasota, FL 34231.

While YON and DANCING LEPERS are youngsters, the RECKLESS DEERHUNTERS are practically geriatric in comparison. Ha, ha. So what if they're on the wrong side of 30? The Deerhunters always put on a tight, energetic, fun show. I hear Ramones, Dayglo Abortions, and Black Flag in their sound. RDH have a few recordings, but nothing they are making available to the public just yet. You can contact them at Recklessdeerhunters@hotmail.com.

OK, so we have a few local bands and a place to play. But here's the really cool part. Our shows raise money to keep the scene alive. We have regular benefit shows to support our zine, *Burn Brandon,* and a record label, Burn Brandon Records.

Burn Brandon zine started about three years ago and we have put out ten issues. Usually one good benefit show will pay for the production of 100 to 150 zines, which are given away. The last issue came with a 34-band "timeline of punk" CD-R. Sorry, all ten issues are gone, but maybe by the time you see this, we will have another issue out.

The zine is a community effort. Anybody can submit whatever they want and we will run it. When we have enough pages for an issue, we schedule a benefit show and a zine assembly party. Foreign scene reports are a popular feature in Burn Brandon. We have had reports from the Philippines, Colombia, Mexico, Israel, South Korea, and more. If you would like to submit a scene report, contact me at the address at the end. Pat is in charge of the letters section. If you want to send a letter to the zine, send it to BurnBrandon@hotmail.com. Burn Brandon does not have a mailing address because we don't want to get on a bunch of mailing lists. Please don't send us review material, either. Our reviewers write about records that they have discovered on their own. The zine does not accept advertising. We don't want it and we don't need it.

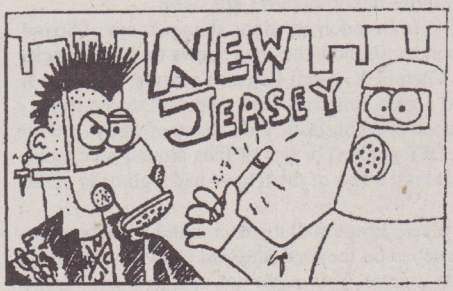
Following in the same spirit of *Burn Brandon* zine is Burn Brandon Records. Benefit shows pay for everything and we give the records away.

So far, we have released a CD with 16 local bands (1,000 copies) and a split 7" (500 copies). The CD got a real crappy review in *Maximum Rocknroll*, which was a bit harsh. Mark Murrman gave the HECATEST/STIFFS 7" a favorable mention in his column a while back. The split 7" has also received good reviews in *Heartattack* and *Short Fast & Loud.* Sorry, both records are gone, but we are working on Burn Brandon Records #3.

At the last meeting we voted that the next release will be a DANCING LEPERS/RECKLESS DEERHUNTERS 7". The scheduled release date is late November 2002. We figure that five benefit shows should be enough to finance 500 records.

It really surprises me that people are not doing this all over the place. Get organized, have a few shows and put the money toward a common cause. It's not rocket science. Small town kids, get to work!

If anybody has any questions about how Burn Brandon operates or if you would like your band to play in Brandon, get in touch with me. I'm afraid I can't help every band that asks. I really do not like poppy punk, indie-rock, ska, mosh-metal, and emo, so you guys probably shouldn't bother. Send a record, tape or CD to my PO Box with your contact info. Don't ask me to go to your web page and download your MP3s because I don't know what that means and I don't wanna know. I want to have a record in my hands with your lyrics and maybe a goofy picture on the back cover. Bob Suren, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, sndidea@ix.netcom.com



So many good bands are coming out of New Jersey these days that I just feel like it's much needed to write about it. What I've noticed about most punk/hardcore/grind and yes, even crust bands around here is that most of them really support each other. Here are just some of the bands that deserve some support.

SOMETH1NG IN THE WATER are really blasting out some great shit, with their drummer Kris B. totally obliterating everything in his path. They play some excellent hardcore and I think Kris really gives them an edge that is much needed today. The most recent show they played was with Misery and Dropdead in Philly. Both bands are absolute legends in their own right. Something In The Water is getting some well deserved attention right now. Im sure they have something out. Must be heard!

ESOWELL have like a hardcore/screamo thing going right now. Their pretty tight and they put on some great local band shows. They sound excellent and you can tell they really love playing and watching bands. They are definitely all about helping out the scene that's around. Im not sure if their recording is done yet, but I'm sure it will be by the time you read this. Check them out.

GIVE US BRABBAS have to be one of the most original bands around here. I met Vinny and he hooked up my band with our first show. We sounded like dog shit and kept terrible timing, but Vin was right in front of us the whole time bobbing his head and happy that we were there. A great supporter of F.N.B. Their lyrics are educated, funny, and knowledgeable. Their music is fastpaced and keeps you interested. Get their CD now!

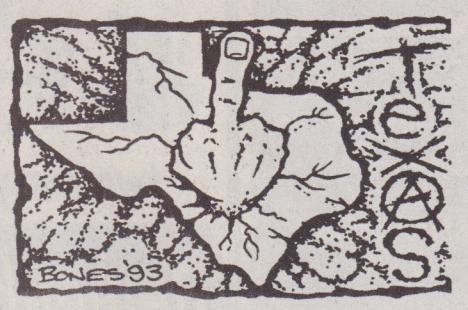
H-BOMBS have an early 80s Cali type style to them. Think early C.O.C. Their lyrics try to be humorous and sometimes work. Lyric-wise I'd say they write close to M.D.C., but without the political tidbits. All and all a good band. The have an album out on CD format with many songs. Worth a listen to.

PLANNED COLLAPSE have a very straightforward thrashy hardcore sound. Anarcho/Peace lyrics, a little black metal, and a definite crust influence. Similar to Disrupt, but they also have some Amebix styled parts as well. Supporters of F.N.B. They have an EP out on CD format. 3 bucks through the mail. Get it!

SPAUL were straight up grind until they got a new vocalist and perhaps other members as well. The play more power violence now and got more political. I know of their '98 demo and a tape that they came out with a few years ago. Their most recent work is supposed to be in a 12" 5-way split also featuring Planned Collapse, but who knows if that will ever surface. Cool shit,

X-FACTOR bring some heavy hitting hardcore. Currently they're looking for a new drummer, and I hope they find one quick—they rock! They cover Emperor and do it right! They bring a sound like Gorilla Biscuits, but a little faster.

Anyone looking on more info on these bands can write me: E-Rok, 306 Cypress Pt. Dr., Toms River, NJ 08753, or email me GOMORRAHSET@aol.com. We need your support! Thanks. Peace!



Hello, wolfbooger here. The Houston, TX hardcore scene? How is it? Well I'm glad you asked Houston has always had a good variety of extreme music, past & present. As of now: PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER is probably the sickest band around. They are a grindcore trio that to me sounds like Cripple Bastards with more time changes and lots of cool mosh/slam parts. A mix of political & personal lyrics. ONE LAST CHANCE is the biggest newer band of political crusty H.C. youngsters. These dudes came out of nowhere and blew a lot of locals away. No generic bore-core here. They have anarchist lyrics and are always good showmen.

E.O.S. (EPITOMY OF SOCIETY) and VIOLENT PEASANT UPRISING are the youngest kids out right now. E.O.S. stick out with awesome guitar licks and raw, angry female vocals. Catchy stuff. VIOLENT PEASANT UPRISING remind me of The Wretched with blast beats thrown in here & there. Very chaotic fast thrash with One rap & breakdance number...very entertaining. Both bands ages range from 14-?. WRATH OF BEOWULF...ahhh metal attack! These warriors are a '80s thrash metal revival blasto with Exodus *Bonded By Blood* style music with high pitched vocals. Some song titles include "lone warrior, fire breather, deciples of metal, ect." Better watch your ass! SICK ABUSE was a band that I played in. First on drums then on 2nd guitar. We have since broken up, but we have more stuff coming out soon. We are compared by most as early '80s thrash/punk. If you have heard SICK ABUSE and like it, then keep an ear out for EAR DAMAGE...coming to rip your ears off!!! Features members of PLF & SICK ABUSE. Long time rippers KRULLUR (since 1989) are still wreaking havoc 'round these parts, but are unfortunately on hiatus right now. These guys have a GISM/Extreme Noise Terror/Kreator hybrid sound with still unmatched musicianship within the local H.C. scene. Finally, my new band in which I am drumming, RACE AGAINST TIME. We are made by members of PLF, SICK ABUSE, & Reason of Insanity a band from Louisiana that myself and our bassist played in). We have a sound similar to old Japanese thrash with wanna-be Articles of Faith & Poison Idea parts...I don't know...I can't do this...you will just have to contact the bands and see for yourself....

contact:

PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER,WRATH OF BEOWULF, & RACE AGAINST TIME at Indecipherable Crap Records c/o Dave PO BOX 7537 Houston, TX 77270-7537

ONE LAST CHANCE at bigballaolc@yahoo. or Mike 2951 Marina Bay Blvd. Suite 130-503 League City, TX 77573

E.O.S. at Kirke 1208 Idylwild Houston, TX 77009

VIOLENT PEASANT UPRISING at ???...maybe contact E.O.S., they might know. Sorry, and don't even try to contact SICK ABUSE because we hate you all. Peace man.

KRULLUR at 7338 Barton Oaks Houston, TX 77095 contact: EAR DAMAGE at Frank 8818 Trail Ridge Forest

And where do these bands play? Well suprisingly there are not a lot of places that do all ages DIY shows. Most places are 21 over or very prone to getting police attention & getting shut down. The only place that comes to mind for good all ages shows is the CENTER FOR CREATIVE AUTONOMY on 2014 Washington or creative_autonomy@hotmail.com. It is, however, more than a place for shows. I am not an activist, but I am aware that they have workshops, barter cafe, political meetings, and othe goodies for the more "aware". If you desire more info, contact them. I'm sure they won't sound as stupid as I. THE AXIOM is re-open and not very cool at all. Charging $10 for local bands and being 21 & over... give me a break. Don't even bother.

So now what? Record stores? ahhh yes. ROCKPILE RECORDS (which also holds all ages free shows) is my personal favorite. Always a good selection of old & new rare punk/H.C./metal/you name it. Awesome records at awesome prices, and that's rare these days. Rockpile is located @ 2404 Montrose. SOUND EXCHANGE (wow, they hold all ages shows, too!) is another favorite of mine. Just like Rockpile, Sound Exchange gets some pretty rare gems in there sometimes. Sound Exchange is located @ 1846 Richmond. SOUNDWAVES @ 3509 Montrose (be careful, there is more than one) never ceases to amaze me with the awesome records I find in there. Not too many old gems, but as far as reissues & newer releases, this is your place. And finally my honorable mention VINAL EDGE is really good for old & new stuff. Just not as consistant with the goods as the others.13171 Vet. Memorial Dr. Well that's it...oh and bands on tour...COME TO HOUSTON!!!! It'll be fun I promise. Remember, Houston has the best & rowdiest slam pits in Texass(hole). Yee Haw!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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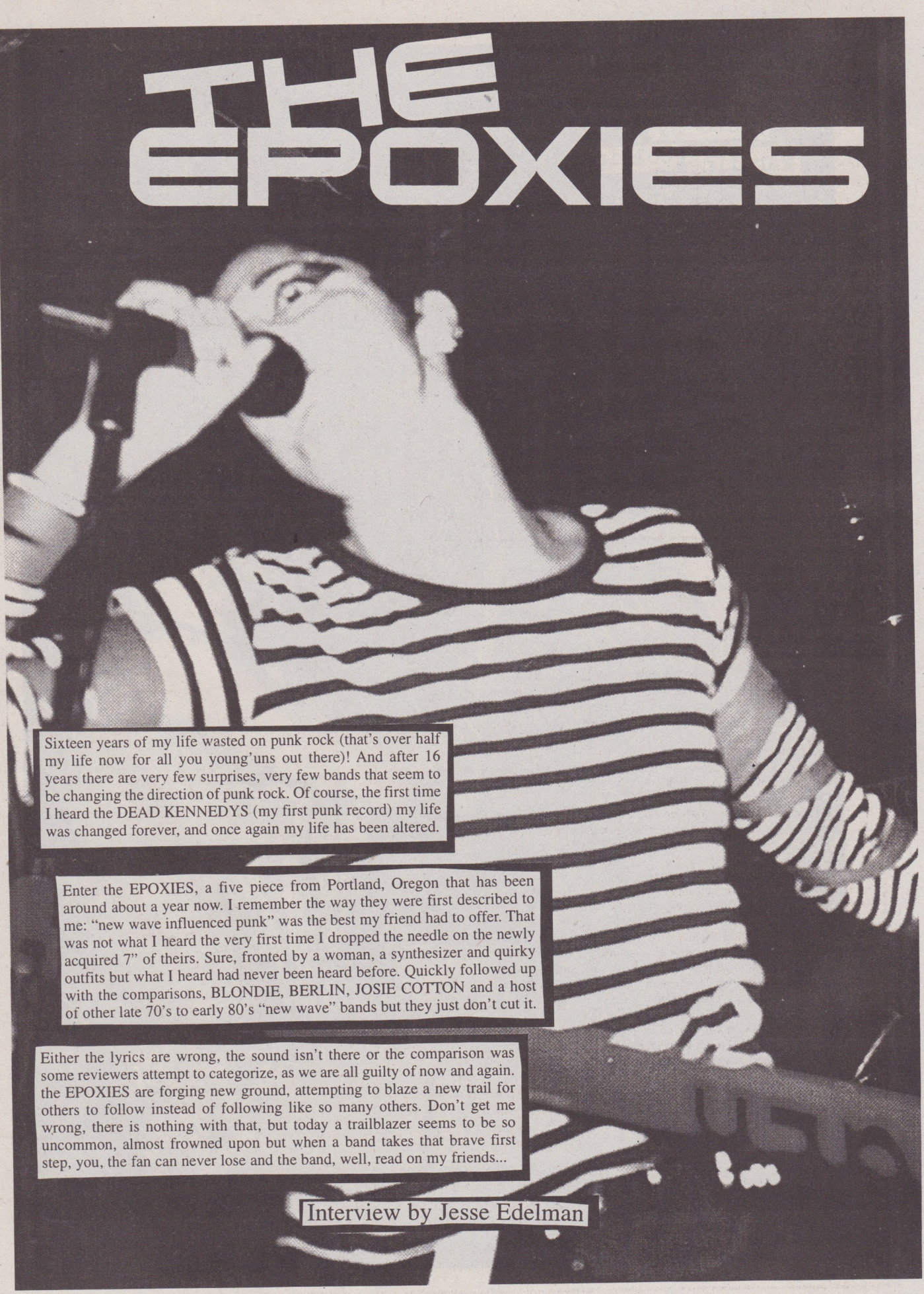
THE EPOXIES



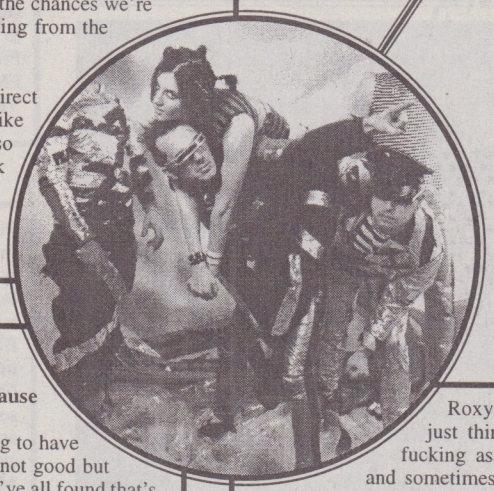
Sixteen years of my life wasted on punk rock (that's over half my life now for all you young'uns out there)! And after 16 years there are very few surprises, very few bands that seem to be changing the direction of punk rock. Of course, the first time I heard the DEAD KENNEDYS (my first punk record) my life was changed forever, and once again my life has been altered.

Enter the EPOXIES, a five piece from Portland, Oregon that has been around about a year now. I remember the way they were first described to me: "new wave influenced punk" was the best my friend had to offer. That was not what I heard the very first time I dropped the needle on the newly acquired 7" of theirs. Sure, fronted by a woman, a synthesizer and quirky outfits but what I heard had never been heard before. Quickly followed up with the comparisons, BLONDIE, BERLIN, JOSIE COTTON and a host of other late 70's to early 80's "new wave" bands but they just don't cut it.

Either the lyrics are wrong, the sound isn't there or the comparison was some reviewers attempt to categorize, as we are all guilty of now and again. the EPOXIES are forging new ground, attempting to blaze a new trail for others to follow instead of following like so many others. Don't get me wrong, there is nothing with that, but today a trailblazer seems to be so uncommon, almost frowned upon but when a band takes that brave first step, you, the fan can never lose and the band, well, read on my friends...

Interview by Jesse Edelman

MRR: Standard intro interview question, who are you and what do you do?
Roxy: <yawn>
Viz: I'm Viz Spectrum and I play guitar.
FM: FM Static, I play keyboards and sing backup vocals.
Roxy: Roxy Epoxy, vocals.
Shock: Shock Diode, bass.
MRR: New bass.
Shock: New bass.
MRR: So let's start with a little history of the members…at least one of you has been in a band before and I am assuming that most of you have been in bands before, do you want to shed a little light on past experiences and how that affects what or who the EPOXIES are?
FM: At this point we've got a pretty…pretty long list of bands that this band has been in before
Viz: Yea, kinda most of us I guess.
MRR: Not to hash up old memories…
FM: I think this band is a direct response to every other band we've ever been in
Viz: it's kinda anti…
FM: It's an anti…for me it's my chance to do everything right that we've done wrong before in a way, or even just to do things I couldn't do in other bands.
MRR: Like playing the keyboards?
FM: Not exactly that because I didn't even set out to play keyboards in this band it just sort of happened because we couldn't find another keyboard player. Some of the chances we're taking, not being tough, writing songs that are kind of musical, deviating from the rock-n-roll formula a little bit.
Viz: Not being punk.
FM: Not being punk, which we totally are in a sense, it's a pretty direct response to the current trends in the northwest as far as band I see like Nashville Pussy and Zeke. I think those bands are good but they're so imitated, and its become that sort of down and dirty, tattooed, black leather wearin', dirty rock-n-roll that's been put on such a pedestal that it almost seems necessary for someone to stand up and say "hey, what about ridiculous new wave?"



Roxy: We're gay!
FM: We're about being totally un-cool.
MRR: So does the different styles of bands you've come from cause any tension?
FM: Its kind of fascinating to me, any band with five people is going to have some tensions as far as what everybody thinks is good or thinks is not good but its pretty surprising that there seems to be this middle ground that we've all found that's so far away from anything else we've done before but it sounds right, it works. It's like we hit on this really unexpected type of music that we all like.
Viz: It seems like the bands he (points to FM) and I were in before, were kind of like projects anyway.
FM: Right, but they were so far away from…
Viz: Totally different from each other but we had a lot of the same experiences.
FM: Yea, right, right.
Viz: We were inundated.
MRR: (While FM is away) Anyone else want to share their experiences?
Roxy: I've never been in a band before; this is my very first band.
Shock: It's been a couple of years almost since I've been in a band.
MRR: Ummm.
Roxy: We're coming across as so boring.
Shock: The lack of sleep is definitely not helping…
Roxy: That should improve your responses! Be creative.
(FM returns)
MRR: Why did the band form…why this style of music and dress? I know a few band members said the bands makes a lot of their clothes and that there is a statement behind the clothes as well as the music you play.
FM: Not so much a statement I would say. It's just like…
Roxy: We're just not worrying about it.
FM: Yea.
Roxy: We're just kinda dinkin' around.
FM: We want it to be something different like the jeans and t-shit thing is so played out…like these earnest guys that are just like everyone else and their nice guys, like regular fellows wearing these regular clothes. We want to be more of a show and dress really ridiculously and not in <skaters ride by again> and pants, stuff like that, because that automatically makes you look like a total asshole.
Viz: (laughs) In the bad way.
FM: Yea, in a bad way. Duct tape just offers so many possibilities too and it's cheap.
Roxy: Of course we don't look like assholes at all.
FM: Well we look like total assholes.
(laughs all around)
Viz: It's low budget.
Roxy: You can look like an asshole for much cheaper.
FM: We don't think we're cool, we look like we know we're assholes.
Viz: Yea.
FM: It constantly walking a fine line with this band.

Roxy: We hear a lot that people just think of us as just the biggest fucking assholes as we walk on stage and sometimes we change their minds but generally people say "what the fuck are these morons tying to pull off?!?"
FM: I've heard that a lot, like "as soon as I saw you guys walk on stage I was ready to hate you but then by the end of your set I really liked you."
Viz: It's all in good fun, that's the thing, to make it more fun. Just looking like normal people it's not that big of a show "…here I am amongst normal people just like I always am…" but you watching a bunch of people dressed like big idiots.
FM: It's just to make it more interesting. Kind of a sacrifice on our part, we'll sacrifice our…
Roxy: Dignity.
Viz: (laughs) Dignity.
FM: We totally sacrifice our dignity and our every weekend and moment of every free time we have putting together ridiculous outfits and creating stage shows.
MRR: Choreography?
FM: Choreography—exactly! If it pays, if people can see the effort involved.
MRR: A lot of people out there want to call the EPOXIES "new wave" but I call it "anti-wave." Can you explain your stance new wave, anti-wave and "wave" in general?
Roxy: It's pretty widespread.
FM: That's a pretty tough question to answer, ya know, you have to define your terms a little bit. New wave is just a marketing term for punk rock. It's a real catchall. The bands that got called new wave are everything from powerpop to reggae to this crazy synthesizer noise to punk rock bands.
Viz: I know that the Dead Kennedys use to call themselves that, all the bands did, it was just more easy to stomach. Punk rock was "scary," ya know "…those are the people that poke things in our faces, hurt other people…" but new wave was…
FM: Punk rockers just want to hurt people.
(laughs)
Viz: Well that's generally my sentiment, you know.

FM: I think we get the wave band thing just because we're drawing from a lot of influences that…I dunno, we're totally a punk band but the term punk has gotten so narrow over the last 20 years that people soon fall into two or three rigid categories if you're called a punk band.

MRR: Yea, punk means nothing, punk is sort of the top-level and then you sub-categorize…

FM: Yea, yea, it's like so many bands that are part of the punk echelon, or whatever, wouldn't be called punk bands anymore. Like somebody…if BLACK FLAG came out now people would say, "they're not punk, they're some kind of weird arty noise experiment." People would call them indy rockers or something now. Now you have something like the '77 bands, or one of the RAMONES rip off bands, it's like they've dialed it down such exact formulas…

MRR: Lo-fi, garage…

FM: Right, right, right, you could go on and on because there's hundreds of sub-genres but I guess maybe we fit one too now but I think that's why people grasp at new wave; it's another way of explaining it.

MRR: I think that answers the question well…

FM: I certainly don't reject it. If people want to call us a new wave band

that's fine too.

Viz: I mean honestly, we did say, "let's start a new wave band."

FM: It's true. Then we tried to figure out what that meant after the fact and it was very confusing because as it turns out it doesn't mean anything.

Viz: Yea.

MRR: About the keyboard…past and present…though there may be influences but I feel that there is something new going on, almost revolutionary.

FM: In the use of synthesizers?

MRR: Yea.

Viz: You mean for us?

MRR: Yea.

FM: Well thanks first of all. It certainly feels revolutionary because they're so out of fashion…

MRR: …and yours is the cool guitar style.

(laughs)

FM: Right, but, ya know that was made 20 years ago it can only be so revolutionary to actually play the thing but it is strange because you do see nowadays a lot of the bands the kids are listening to, I go to these all ages shows, stuff that's not really considered punk rock but they're using a lot of the synthesizers, old synthesizers 'cause it's…

Viz: Cool.

FM: Cool, ya know, it's the same as picking up an old guitar back in the 80s when people the shreddin' metal guitars and the kids were snatchin' up these old slivertones and stuff and started playing garage rock. Now you've got these cheap synthesizers hangin' around and everyone's playing guitars so what are the kinds gonna do but look for something different.

Viz: It's always kina like a 20-year cycle too.

MRR: (points to Viz) …and you have a flying V guitar too, right?

Viz: I, not…well I actually have a flying V but I don't ever use it.

Shock: Speaking of metal guitars.

Viz: The guitar I have is more out of hand that a flying V.

Shock: Yea it's a super-metal guitar!

Viz: It's an Ace Freely Washburn actually…it's got a lightning bolt on it, it's super-silly. It the most ridicules guitar every made I would imagine, or close to it. It works for this band, it's real science fictiony looking—it's Ace Freeley who's a space ace…

FM: It fits. With all the angles, you can't play it sitting down.

Viz: A flying V would work, maybe my flying V will work someday.

MRR: The one thing that I have always said about the EPOXIES is this: when you drop the needle on a record you generally expect the typical stuff, right. Every once in a while, when you don't know what to expect and you get that totally unexpected gem—that is what I felt with the first 7". Of the references I have seen tossed out I did not think BLONDIE, KIM WILDE, BERLIN, it was something I had never heard before and that's why I always say things like ground breaking.

FM: One thing that I've been doing since we started this band has been searching for the band that we sound like and I haven't found it. As much as we're heavily influenced by a lot of bands we don't, I think, sound like any other band.

MRR: Unless you lived in that innocent vacuous state how could you not be influenced by some bands?

FM: Virtually, deliberately influenced by them and sometimes you can sit down and hear little bits that are clearly ripped from different songs…

Viz: Shamelessly.

FM: Shamelessly, right.

MRR: I know I've asked about the lyrics before…there just seem to be a breadth of topics covered. From nuclear war to social retardation to space aliens…

FM: That's purposely left a little vague.

Viz: Aliens in the sense of disconnection in any case.

FM: Yea, alien as icon for innocence or something like that.

MRR: Is there any insight you can offer to some of the lyrics in general like the breadth of topics covered?

FM: That's tough because it's a pretty general question. All I can say is that it seems to just stem out of…I don't know. I don't just sit down and say "I'm gonna write a song about this or that now" but there seems to be, as collectively we seem to have some sort of consciousness that gives a direction to the lyrics.

MRR: So how do you write songs then? Is it collective? Is it individual then it comes together?

FM: It varies, sometimes somebody will bring basically a song to the band but more often someone will bring some elements of a song and everyone will simply add to that. There seems to be some sort of recurring theme involving alienation in society and sometimes we're sort of embracing it, deliberately protesting it but I think all of it is commentary about how distant we feel from each other and how technology in society has a tendency to dehumanize us in some ways.

MRR: I just assumed the song "Please, Please" was about aliens just because…

FM: Oh it is.

MRR: The direction of…

FM: Yea it absolutely is but you can also look at that as like sort of a commentary on…

MRR: But I think a lot of people feel disconnected from society even here.

FM: Right, right…well that's sorta where it is. Technically it's talking about an alien but what it's really talking about is what earth is like and how terrible it is here and how it has a tendency to crush people and If you were innocent of all that you wouldn't stand a chance here.
Viz: It's kind of warning us, it's like get out before it's too late.
FM: Yea, it's a warning… "I've been down here for oh so many years. I scarcely notice now the things they do."
MRR: Eh, they'll crush your soul if they get the chance.
FM: Right, and as they have to all of us. That's basically the point.
(we are soon met with many aws from rest of the band followed by laughter.)
MRR: There are some more songs that I am more interested in…like "Need More Time." I know that one was about the closing of the Portland institution EJ's.
FM: Well, we wrote that song collectively
Viz: The first few lines are having to do with how after EJ's the punk rock scene just kind of died all of the sudden and it was just kinda sad all the kids were in their basements with their stereo because that's more fun. That's where all the shit happens now is in the basements, kids go to basement shows and there's no real great place for fun things to happen, EJ's was the end of an era.
Roxy: It definitely was the case at the time; it's gotten better since then.
Viz: Yea, it's not like that now.
Roxy: But at the time oh yea…
FM: It was really sad.
Viz: At the last show, we got all drunk and stole the toilet seat.
(laughs—if you had never been to EJ's, just imagine the worst toilet in the world…)
FM: Yea we have the toilet seat from EJ's still.
Shock: I'm sorry I missed that.
MRR: Do you still have it?
Viz: It's in the backyard.
FM: Yea, we figured that was the safest place to store it.
Roxy: In this backyard?
Viz: Yea, this backyard.
Roxy: I wanna see it.
(Roxy gets up and goes into the backyard, asking for a big stick, to see a piece of history…too bad the lawn has overgrown in that spot and it is no longer visible.)
MRR: Yea, it's real depressing to drive by. I drove by it today and it a pawn show now.
FM: Silver Lining.
MRR: A couple of other songs…"Stop Looking at Me" and "Losing Control."
Roxy: Did I write those?
(laughs)
Roxy: Crap! Ah yes, "Stop Looking at Me" is social retardation. We all have those days where you say one thing to someone and you're just convinced that you sound like a total fucking idiot and then everyone in turn thinks you're a total fucking idiot. It's just about those sorts of days. And "Losing Control" that was just a train of thought on how people live their lives with nothing moving, just sit there doing their day today stuff and ten years down the line their like "oh shit, I forgot to do everything. I'm old now!"
MRR: So, Shock, was there a test like an endurance test to be in the band?
Shock: Yea, they make me practice on Sunday at 11:00 and that's quite an endurance test but I've passed that so far…more or less.
Roxy: I heard he passed the ultimate test the other day in his room.
Shock: Ah yes…
(laughs)
MRR: And the ultimate test is?
Shock: To make a complete and total ass of yourself. Basically we bought these hats for our next show, that I don't think I could possibly describe, but I found that it helps me to practice a lot better with it on. It was warm and I was just rocking out in my room…
FM: They're basically West German military hats that look like super-fascist type hats.
Shock: I was basically rocking out shirtless in my room with the door open thinking nobody was home and my roommate wandered in while I was bouncing around my room like a fool; wearing only pants and this dictator hat…
Roxy: No shoes
Shock: …no shoes. My roommate was very entertained.
MRR: So, Dirtnap did the 7" and I know that did fairly well, was it a no brainer to stay with Dirtnap for the full length?
FM: Pretty much. Ken is super-nice and has just been really helpful and supportive and he was ready to go. The 7" did do really well on Dirtnap and Dirtnap seems like a really cool up and coming label too. In addition to Ken just being a really super great guy having helped us the whole way, it just seemed like a really good label to be on.
MRR: How was the recent West Coast tour?
FM: It was great! It pretty much shattered all expectations, our record came out right at that time and did just far better than we ever expected and our last SF show sold out. A lot of people were there to see us and it got the wheels turning for us as far as how much can we do this…how much time can we spend on the road, how seriously can we take this.
MRR: Are there any good road stories? Leaving band members on the side of the road…
FM: We're such a boring band…
Roxy: No, it did happen! The four of us got left on the road…well sorta.
FM: That's actually when the bass player decided he didn't want to be in the band anymore was on the road.
MRR: Oh really!
FM: He decided it by leaving…he left all his gear on stage, just walked out and ended up at some bar.
Roxy: We found him annihilated, passed out on the bar.
FM: Apparently he couldn't get into the strip club 'cause he was too wasted. He wasn't very talkative after that.
MRR: Did you then have to thumb it home?
FM: No, no, we had the van. We actually had to track him down
Roxy: He would have had to thumb it home with the $40 he had.
MRR: How would you compare your first West Coast tour to this one?
FM: It was day and night really. We had some really good shows on the first tour too but they were all really good because somebody else was playing. This time some people came to see us which was nice. We had the album out and there were people there that were actually waiting to hear our songs.
MRR: You know that even though I too live in Portland I still have never seen the band live yet.
(laughs)
Roxy: That's OK
FM: Actually I kind of happy every time I find somebody who likes us who's never seen us live because our live show is such a big part of what we do. It validating to know the music works on its own.
MRR: So what's the future hold for the EPOXIES?
FM: Well, we just got done laying out the next six or eight months of touring planned…
Roxy: 12...
FM: So we're going to do another West Coast tour in September, we're just going to try to hold down the west coast through the winter and then go out for the whole US sometime in spring. Hopefully we might have a new album out by then. For the September tour we're hoping to have a CDEP together that we're going to do on Dirtnap and that's gonna be maybe four or five songs and we hope to put a couple of videos on it…we embrace the future and everything…and we have a video camera. (laughs).
MRR: I've heard a lot of stories about the current video that you have available on your web site.
Roxy: Stories?!?
FM: The video has actually been really good for us some people said that it just totally made them fans.
Viz: Not too bad for spending an hour and no money at all.
FM: Zero dollars!
MRR: My favorite part of the interview, what is something you, individually, want to answer or wanted to be asked?
FM: We like the let the music speak for itself.
Viz: Thanks for not beating us up!
FM: Yea, thanks for not beating us all up for being ridiculous and richly deserving of beatings as we clearly are.
(laughter)

If you want to find out more about the EPOXIES including tour dates, downloading the video, song samples, etc. visit them at their web site http://www.theepoxies.com. If you are interested in either their full length or 7" please feel free to contact the Ken over at Dirtnap Records in Seattle by surfing to http://www.dirtnaprecs.com or writing to Dirtnap Records—PO Box 21249—Seattle, WA 98111. Me, I am outta here off to more work in the trenches and you, what in the hell are you still doing here...were you not convinced that have their record was a must...now get!

Puppy vs. Dyslexia

Interview By Jon Hancuff

Bloomington, Indiana has had more than its share of bands. The town, home to sprawling, conservative Indiana University, where date rapes and frat drinking deaths do nothing to diminish the turnout for cover bands and dime beer nights – has also been home to some of the best bands to come out of the Midwest. Punk notables the Gizmos, Walking Ruins, The Smears were (and in some cases – still are) based in this aberration in south central Hoosier land. The current punk scene has been on the rebound since the arrival of the (now defunct) Operation: Cliff Clavin. One of the bands to arise in this latest wave, is also one of the most original – Puppy vs. Dyslexia. A staple of the local scene for the last two years – Puppy released their first CD this past spring/summer. The CD "Let's Foam" is on the Fuck Me Stupid Mountain Princess Recording Collective label that the band started before moving to Bloomington. The album is unlike anything else in Bloomington – its influences span a lot of punk and alternative ground – from the Stooges to the Dead Milkmen to Beck and Sonic Youth to the Germs and Circle Jerks.

I met the band in a bar called Uncle Elizabeth's at 4 p.m. on a Friday afternoon – the day before they are leaving to start their second tour of the south and southwest. There is a big screen t.v. behind the bar blasting "Oprah." We sit at a table between the door and the bar – they split a pitcher of beer.

"Let's foam" is as hyper and frenetic as anything this side of Tokyo, but in person the band is quiet, laid-back, and almost shy. They are relaxed in each other's presence and they obviously feed off each other – building upon an idea until they all laugh.

Puppy vs. Dyslexia are (according to the liner notes):
Zak = guttar, bass, and satan tongue
Leah = ax 4-strings, screem and keyboard
Jerome (pronounced "Jeremy") = fuked up beats, the yell, and randum coughs

MRR: First of all, why don't you tell me a little about the history of the band. Are you guys from Kentucky?

Zak: We met in Owensboro.

Leah: I had lived there for a couple of years. And right before I was ready to move up to Bloomington I met these guys.

Jerome: She didn't join the band until about '98.

Zak: I guess it started in '97. Jerome and I were in two bands before that — really bad punk pop bands.

Jerome: They were funny – in a bad way. It was funny that we were doing them.

MRR: So why did you guys move to Bloomington? School?

Jerome: Pretty much because of Leah. We really needed to get out of Owensboro.

Zak: She was going to school here.

MRR: So when did you move up here?

Zak: Fall of '98.

MRR: (to Leah) So how did you end up in Bloomington?

Leah: It was my senior year in high school and I wanted to get out of the house. And this was the quickest surest bet.

MRR: Are you still going to school?

Leah: I've dropped out for awhile. I still have a year to go – I will go back sometime.

MRR: How did you come up with your name?

Zak: We used to write these fucked up letters to people that we

hated. They really didn't make any sense – we'd just sit at a typewriter and go crazy. We'd drink lots of coffee and take my mom's diet pills. We'd just sit in Jerome's room and go insane at the typewriter. When it was time to think of a band name, we went through all of the letters and made a huge list of all these names. We thought that was the best one.

Jerome: There were so many good ones.

Leah: "The Real Flaming Dolphin."

Zak: "Husky Camel Phone."

Jerome: I think a lot of them were good though.

MRR: While listening to the album I was trying to figure out what you guys listen to.

Zak: We're all pretty eclectic.

Leah: I end up listening to a lot of Spearhead these days – which is nothing like what we do.

Jerome: I've been listening to a lot of free jazz and hip-hop lately.

Zak: Political punk – I guess.

Leah: I guess. (laughs)

Jerome: Our influences have changed a lot, I guess, since we started. We've been together for kind of a long time.

Zak: We pretty much grew up on Sonic Youth and the Boredoms and stuff.

MRR: You guys are one of the few bands I've heard that have listened to a lot of the Japanese bands and sound like them without totally ripping them off. It just seems like a lot of the Japanese bands are a lot more hyper.

Jerome: That's a lot of our favorite music – the Boredoms.

Leah: A lot of it goes back to the diet pills too.

Jerome: Yeah that helped a lot. Since we've started drinking more, though, it's different.

Leah: We're slowing down in our old age.

Zak: And we smoke a pack a day. We still go fucking insane, but –

Leah: We take naps now after we play.

Zak: I guess we're pretty passive-aggressive.

Jerome: We're tame when we're hanging out – but when we play, we're fucking crazy. We keep on getting crazier. Zak recently broke his wrist at a show.

Leah: That kind of put us on the outs a little bit. I thought we were passive-aggressive because we were like family, though.

Zak: Yeah, we're move than friends, we're family.

Zak and Leah: We're not a band – we're a gang.

Zak: That's our new motto.

Jerome: Speaking of family – we just added a new member. He's a drummer.

Leah: He hasn't practiced or played with us yet.

MRR: Is going on tour with you?

Jerome: Not this tour.

Leah: His name is Grant Pershing (none of us were sure how to spell his last name – sorry, Grant).

MRR: How did you guys meet him?

Zak: He plays in The Devil is Electric. He's been hanging out in Bloomington for awhile.

Leah: He'd be here, today, but he's banned from the bar. He broke a couple of ribs in a bar brawl last night.

MRR: What do you think of Bloomington, as a home for a band?

Zak: I like it. It kind of fluctuates a lot.

Jerome: It's a really easy place to get started. You can just get up on stage and just run around.

Leah: Kids are pretty accepting and pretty forgiving.

Zak: There were a lot of good bands, but it seems like they're diminishing right now.

MRR: I was thinking about how when I came here in '92 as far as punk went it was the Smears, who were great, and the Walking Ruins – then the scene seemed to go dead for awhile. It seems like the scene came back to life about the time that Operation: Cliff Clavin started. What influence have they had on you guys?

Zak: They helped us a lot – they pretty much got us playing out.

Jerome: Yeah, we lived here for like a year without playing.

Zak: We just practiced in our house all the time and we never really went out and met anybody.

Leah: Ali from the Sissies was a big help too.

Zak: Ali would get us shows and stuff. When we first started she would claim to be our manager.

Leah: But then she gave us the big talk – "You don't need me anymore, you've moved on." But seriously, we would probably still be playing in our living room if it weren't for all the kids here.

Zak: Yeah, we've made a lot of really good friends.

MRR: Did your mom notice that her diet pills were missing?

Zak: She actually gave them to me. She was selling them to tanning salons and she realized that people were taking them as amphetamines. So she asked me if I wanted some.

Jerome: She gave him two bottles of diet pills and a bottle of Jack Daniels and then sent him over to my house. That was pretty fun.

Leah: Go play with your friends.

Zak: My mom was actually the first person I smoked pot with.

Leah: Your mom was the last person I smoked pot with.

MRR: What sort of effect do you think that Secret Sailor (local punk bookstore/ activism center/ show venue) has had on the scene? They've sort of organized a center for people to work around.

Zak: I think it's pretty awesome and it's sad that it's closing now.

Jerome: I feel like that didn't accomplish everything that it could've.

MRR: What do you guys think about the noise ordinance? (Passed by the city of Bloomington – it allows the police to ticket people if music coming from their house can be heard in the street – regardless of the time of day) What sort of effect has it had on you guys?

Zak: It hasn't had any effect on us – but it sucks, I think its stupid.

Leah: I think that that's the thing – back when we lived in a house on 13th Street we used to practice earlier and the neighbors would come over and ask – "Are you guys moving when your lease runs out – because we'd really appreciate it."

Jerome: Or they'd say – "I really like what you guys do, but we have plans."

Zak: The house we had two years ago was pretty cool – we could play at almost any time. The neighbors didn't give a shit.

Jerome: I'm pretty sure a place like that wouldn't be bothered by the noise ordinance so much.

MRR: Have you guys seen a decrease in the number of basement shows?

Leah: I think that people are a lot more hesitant to try and put them on.

Zak: I think Secret Sailor played a part too – people were like we might as well play at Sailor. It is going to be a problem once Sailor closes down – there is going to be a new bookstore – but its just going to be a bookstore and not a show space. We're looking around for a new show space.

Jerome: I miss the basement shows a lot.

MRR: What about the flier ordinance? (Bloomington recently began enforcing a law that had been on the books for awhile that prohibited the posting of signs on public utility poles – bands or venues can be fined for every flier)

Jerome: It's bullshit. I would love to make fliers for so many shows but you don't want to do it because there's no place to put them.

Leah: And they didn't even put up extra kiosks – and they're not even going to do that until the first of the year. And that's only if they have money left over after they spend everything else.

Zak: There's a couple of them in People's Park (a hangout spot on the main strip – about a block from campus).

Jerome: The only people who are going to see those are drug dealers.

Zak: I think shows are pretty much word of mouth anymore.

Jerome: The Bloomington Show Calendar does a pretty good job.

MRR: This isn't your guys' first tour, right?

Leah: Second.

MRR: It's mostly in the south?

Zak: It's pretty much the same place we went this summer. A few different cities, but the same direction.

Leah: We tried to do a West Coast tour, but things kind of fell through with that. In the spring – (crosses fingers)

MRR: Tell me about the last tour, how did that go?

Zak: It was fun.

Jerome: I was really surprised.

Leah: People were really so good about going out on a limb and helping us. Here it is, this complete stranger emailing saying – "Could you book a show for us?"

Zak: Just be really super nice. We met a lot of really cool people.

MRR: Was the first tour before the album came out?

Zak: Actually we got the CD's like two or three days into the tour.

Jerome: We got fucked over by Aidemedia. They're in New York.

Leah: Basically what it was was that they had us pay a rush fee to make sure we got the CDs in time, before we left for the tour. We called them and were like "Hey, we don't have the CDs from when you said you would send them to us." And they were like "You should have paid an extra $50 on top of that – you should have gotten he super extra rush." Or something like that. And then they never gave us our jewel

cases which were supposed to be included.
Zak: I've had to use the cases from my own CDs.
Leah: We'll start wrapping them up in cereal boxes and hefty bags.
MRR: I've seen you guys live once, at the Madison (a former site of many a basement show).
Leah: When Zak had a kidney stone.
Zak: I had just gotten out of the hospital that morning – and it hadn't passed either. I had to go back to the hospital a couple of times.
MRR: How long did it take to get rid of?
Zak: A couple of weeks.
MRR: Did they say it was caused by diet pills?
Zak: Actually I had a kidney stone three years prior. I guess it's this thing that I'm going to keep having every three or four years. It's kinda cool – morphine.
Leah: Get the drip.
MRR: After seeing the show and then listening to the album, how much of the album can you guys do live?
Zak: I guess we really don't do too much weird stuff live. It's more straightforward songs.
Jerome: It's starting to change, though.
Zak: Once we start playing with Grant, too –
Jerome: It will be a different format. Like, I want to start playing guitar and switching between guitar and trumpet. And Leah's going to play bass and keyboard.
Zak: I'm going to invest in a headset microphone so I can go anywhere.
Leah: And some vocal pedal effects.
MRR: Does the album carry some message? Is there a theme running through it?
Zak: Bone, Bleed, and Burn.
Leah: I think it's more anti-message than anything.
Zak: Yeah, we used to watch really bad movies and kind of take notes – and think of weird stupid shit that makes us laugh.
Jerome: Eventually after doing that so much we just started to live it.
Zak: It was almost like we had a different language for awhile.
MRR: Like twins?
Jerome: Oh yeah – we scared off all of our friends for awhile because we would talk constantly.
Leah: I'm sure the hysterical laughter was a bit unnerving too. "What the hell are you talking about? Why are you laughing?"
MRR: Are you guys content in Bloomington right now? It seems like every other person I meet in town is in the process of moving somewhere else.
Zak: I love this town and I hate this town. I get really sad when I'm not here and I miss it a lot. But once I get back here I kinda get bummed out. I don't know. I think I'm going to keep sticking it out for a while.
Leah: At least until I get it together and finish school I'll be here.
Jerome: I'm not sure how long I want to be a loser anymore. It causes some problems with like – life – you know. It sucks to be a loser. But if there are any kids out there who are still wanting to be losers – I say go with it.
Leah: I'm on my way to becoming a soccer mom.
Zak: We've got the mini-van.
Leah: Got the mini-van — starting to get the cardigan sweaters going on.
Jerome: (pointing to Leah's vinyl windbreaker) Those smooth jackets are very soccer mom.
Zak: Yeah – we tour in a mini-van.
Leah: It's pretty economical. And you get away with murder. Nobody suspects anybody in a mini-van.
Zak: "Man, we just got ripped off. I wonder who did that? – It can't be those people in the mini-van."
Jerome: The only thing that would be more inconspicuous would have to be like a tan ford taurus.
Leah: If only they made a mini-van version we'd probably back it. It's really funny too – we going on tour with our friends ADD/ DC from Chattanooga so there's going to be like eight of us total – everybody is going to think that we're a ska band.
Zak: We're going to bring some trumpets just to psych them out.
MRR: How'd you guys get hooked up with this label?
All: Actually it's us.
Zak: Jerome pretty much started it. We started tape label a pretty long time ago in Kentucky – we put Puppy tapes out.
MRR: None of which are available anymore?

Jerome: We still have the masters.
Leah: If anybody ever wanted them –
Jerome: We'd totally do it.
Zak: We thought about compiling like a bunch of stuff, stuff that's not recorded now – we took a lot of the songs and changed them from the first recording. A lot of songs were like –
Jerome: Unplayable.
Zak: We couldn't play them live, so we had to change them. That's pretty much what's on the CD — a lot of songs that were on the tapes that sound really different.
Jerome: I really like the tapes a lot. They were like lo-fi four-track stuff. But it was really original.
Zak: We might, at some point, put them on a CD.
Jerome: I'm putting out a CD compilation sometime next year. We'll try to do it as soon as possible.
Leah: That will bring you from the status of loser to non-loser.
Jerome: That would be pretty cool.
Zak: We'll try to get people from everywhere.
Jerome: There won't be too much local stuff really.
(At this point I quit taping and took some pictures. I took about five or six pix and then sat back down with the band and we talked as we finished our beers. They told me about how when they first moved to Bloomington they ended up living across the street from Gretchen of the Smears. They met her when she was having a garage sale. Apparently Gretchen owns some rental property in town – but she wouldn't rent to them. Leah ended up buying a guitar from her for $50 but ended up smashing it at what they thought was going to be their "last show." They had decided they were going to break up after the show – they made it about three songs into their set – then just started to destroy everything. The best part, they said, was that some friends of theirs were seeing them for the first time and thought that this was their usual stage show. They loved it. Anyhow – they ended up keeping the band together.)
For more information about Puppy vs. Dyslexia or Fuck Me Stupid Mountain Princess Recording Collective you can go to their website: www.angelfire.com/punk2/fmsmprc or write to FMSMPRC/ Puppy vs. Dyslexia, p.o. box 1792, bloomington, in 47404.

On the strength of their one EP, Koro is one of my all time favorite bands. They played a stripped down, raw brand of hardcore that's as fast as can be while maintaining amazing songwriting qualities. That's to say, I don't think you can write songs that are simultaneously faster and more catchy than Koro did. Along with bands like Deep Wound, Die Kruezen, Anti-Cimex, Void, and Poison Idea, they raised the bar and pushed the limits as to what you could accomplish musically in the genre of hardcore. Unfortunately, those high standards haven't even been challenged.

I managed to get in touch with the founder and main songwriter of this band. The smile didn't leave my face for a few days after Carl first wrote me, and the opportunity to pick his brain and get to know him was more than welcome. While many thought Koro had disappeared off the face of the earth I found out that, quite to the contrary, Carl is still as passionate about music as ever. I was able to learn a great deal about their history and that the short-lived band wasn't just a one night stand in Carl's life as a musician. I'll excerpt from a recent article on Knoxville's musical history written by Mike Gibson as a way of introduction:

Two of the remarkable guitarists who emerged from that milieu were burly, tattooed axe-mangler Carl Snow and Van Halen-obsessed Bearden kid David Teague, the foundation of Knoxville's Koro in 1982. That hardcore unit set out to be "the fastest, tightest band in the world...and they came damn close," remarks Sewell. "They blew everybody else out of the boat. The first time I heard them, they scared me." The singular ferocity of the outfit (their lone 7-inch is now a punk-rock collector's item) owed much to the skills of those two players. Both were chameleons, capable of adapting their styles to multiple contexts, but best-known for their fast, impeccably tight rhythms and rabid solos. "Carl is as talented a musician as has ever been in Knoxville; he can play anything effortlessly, and he can write it out on music paper," says Sewell. Snow played in a handful of other locally-renowned outfits (Red, Whitey...), as did Teague. But Teague's questing took him to points west, where he would record an independent album with the Los Angeles band Muzza Chunka. The band later broke up, but the six-string deities smiled on this particular son of Knoxville guitartistry. Today, he's a member of the long-running and very successful punk band the Dickies and has appeared on the group's last two albums. Interview by David Hyde, it orignally appeared in his zine *Destroy What Bores You.*

KORO

MRR: You started getting into music in Knoxville, TN in the late 70s, right? Was there anything happening there locally or did you just start getting into other stuff you heard?

Carl: The guys I was hanging around those days...well, we had the XTC LPs, some Sham 69, Ruts, Stiff Little Fingers, etc., but not much HC (as it was not recognized yet). We (some of us landed in Koro) had a band in 1979.....whew, now I feel old. I'm the guy who started Koro, then I got Dave Teague on board.

MRR: How did you go from that first band to Koro?

Carl: Dave Teague used to hang around the Trivia Birds' practices and shows, and was/is a good friend. I was "over" the Birds and searching for more and needed a bigger git sound. I thought of Dave. The bassist for T-Birds was Danny, Ron's younger brother (not a great bassist). Greg was an incredible drummer, but he was forming Turbine-44 with Trey and Bart, so I could not get him. We (Dave and I) found out our long time buddy Ron was a really good bassist, but we needed a drummer. Dave knew this guy in a metal band named Bill (God, was he good). We played him the Germs LP and got him to join. For a while I did the vocals as well as (twin leads) guitar, but those songs were very physically demanding to play (the speed) and I would get dizzy after a few songs. So we hunted with no luck, until one day, Scott (Bill's much older half-brother) got dragged to practice. We were fuckin' around, playing "Amoeba" and "Kids of the Black Hole" by the Adolescents and "Revenge" by Black Flag or something like that, when he walked in the garage. He knew the songs! We asked if he'd sing to "Gimme a Break," and blamo! He was in. That's the formation of Koro.

MRR: What about the name Koro?

Carl: The name Koro (also Shookyong) was found in Ron's psychology book (he was the "older guy" in the band and was in college). It was/is a mental disorder that at the time was prevalent among Asians (mainly Japanese). To paraphrase from memory: "Men suffering from Koro (Shookyong) have an overwhelming fear that their genitals will be sucked into their body as they sleep. This causes extreme sleeplessness and panic." Sufferers have their mates *hold* their genitals as they fall asleep or use a clamping device, haha, to hold their genitals in place. Now if *you* were 15 or 16 and *you* read that shit while wanting to name your new band something...how the fuck could you resist!?

MRR: So that's what Koro means—I always figured it was either nonsense or some obscure word with a deep meaning. Well, maybe it is in a way. Was there much of a local scene by the time Koro started playing? What bands were from around there besides you guys?

Carl: Sure, great "scene" as scenes go, I suppose. All "scenes" start fairly well, only to dissolve into smaller cliques and factions. '79-'85, some great things happened. Knoxville, for a while, was almost a shared scene. Bands traveling found K-town a great layover between say, Atlanta, Nashville, Athens, etc. so the Athens/Atlanta/Nashville thing (Chattanooga, to some extent) "helped." We had B-52's, Big Star, REM, Brains, 86, Let's Active playing here a lot, as they shared our region.

Some brilliant K-town bands '79-'85 would be Balboa—incredible and incendiary—the best 'o' the best by far! A few tunes on local compilation, a BRILLIANT 12" EP (brown cover, then "live like this"), 5-Twins—great teen-love song power pop, Jelly Babies…Later there was STD's (vocalist Jon later was in Whitey with me), Turbine 44 (later incarnations were Turbine 25, L7 "box"), Beyond John, who had a great self-titled LP, WH-WH (T-hills band after Balboa) great stuff, UXB, The Scam (Dave's pre-Koro band), Iron Hawg, The Wedge (Dave's post-Koro band), Real Hostages, who were later Smokin' Dave and the Premo Dopes. They had some good output, a few CDs...not my fav though I like all the guys a lot. Also Hector Qirko Blues Band (HQ's band after Balboa) who are *still* a great band, Semi-conductors, another great T-hill band, Teenage Love, Barbed Wire Shela, and on and on...

MRR: Knoxville's music history was richer than I'd thought. Was it just local bands or did touring groups pull through town?

Carl: We played with too many bands over the years to remember: Descendents, Ramones, Big Boys, Dicks, SOA, Minor Threat, Black Flag, Circle Jerks, TSOL, Channel 3, Scream, Chili Peppers, Iggy, and so on. The most fun show was us and Circle Jerks in 1982(3?). The DKs show was hilarious. Another funny story was eating with Black Flag. Hank ending the meal in a food fight. And Ian (Minor, Fugazi) and crew's odd eating regimen (always stayed at my place...very funny).

MRR: The EP that you guys put out is easily one of my favorite records, but not many people even know it exists. You didn't press very many copies of the record. I've heard 300 copies, is that right? How was the reaction to the record—did it sell well, was it well received?

Carl: You mention us pressing 300 copies...naw, it was 500.

MRR: Oh, also, I was actually having a conversation with someone about the Koro record, and he mentioned that many copies were sleeveless, some had the oversize sleeve, and a few had an offset printed sleeve. Is that true? I never knew about the offset version.

Carl: The original EP was regular size with gatefold cover and a handwritten phone number inside and "the baby" on the EP itself. What you are referring to must be one of the many bootlegs out there. So, all told, baby, plus phone, plus lyrics, plus old English Koro writing (cover—"Koro, Eight Songs for a Grave Age"), hand done back and sleeve is original.....any others are boots.

MRR: Why aren't there any lyrics to "Acid Casualty" on the record?

Carl: My mom and pop "put up" the 400 bucks for the EP and we told them "Acid Casualty" was an anti-drug song, when in fact it was about the band getting high! So you can understand why at 16 years of age I would not include those lyrics. They would have worried my parents. Funny thing: after a while Koro went "straight-edge," haha. Mentioning Bart and Trey (friends then) and the "goings on" would not have been good at the time.

Lyrics to "Acid Casualty":

Bart's got the ludes, Bart's got the speed / he's a great guy, he's all we need / people call us queer, people call us tweeked / we keep right along (x3) / we keep snortin' speed / I start to mumble, I can only stumble, my thoughts all crumble like saltine crackers, I'm fucking up and I don't know what to do! / At Trey's house...we fry!

I believe that's accurate—it's been a while.

MRR: The first song, "700 Club," is, obviously enough, about Pat Robertson and the religious right. How prevalent was evangelical religion in the early 80s in Tennessee?

Carl: I wrote this whole mess after getting sick of Pat Robertson and co. Also, these religious zealots used to harass the fuck out of us at school. They called themselves "young life." It was just an excuse to get drunk Friday at the high school football game and repent later. They used to follow us around trying to "save" us.

MRR: "Nauseous" makes reference to Carl and David. Is there any story behind that, or was it just a coincidence that the names used happened to be the names to two members?

Carl: Haha, deep song. On the surface I wrote it about me and Dave puking, but it had a twist. A lot of shit made me wanna puke in those days. Me and Dave hurling after a bottle of something was an unintended "cover" for everything making me wanna puke. Another funny thing. Blap! is about a dumb girl we all knew who did one too many Quaaludes, fell down, and asked "did I go "blap?" As I said earlier Richard (RIP) Creekmore wrote the words. It started as a Trivia Birds song (Me, Danny (bs) Ron's younger brother!, and Greg). At the time Dave had a band called The Squad (hence the line calling him "Dave Squad"). Richard called him D-Squid. We used to play this beautiful dump with Dave's Squad, Greg's Turbine 44 (yup, he was in two bands at the time), and Jon's band Jelly Babys (later called STD's). The original (Trivia) version was without the intro and outro—Greg could have played it, but Danny was not that great on bass. Koro decided to do it cause we all dug it, but it needed the "Koro" signature on it somewhere. At first I was like, well, I like it like as it is, then under pressure (and help) from Dave it was decided to add the intro and outro. I said "OK, lessee if we can play this!" "Ha!" "I'll show them" The intro is a tough cord progression to say the least, but the guys nailed it. So me wanting still to fuck with them said, "yeah but at the end I wanna do the intro again *double time*!" I thought I had 'em but was wrong (thankfully). This is my favorite Dave solo ever! He nailed it in one take...one note at the solo intro is *off* the neck (high) and Dave was determined to "get it" so he practiced the lick forever with great result. Note: Dave always "wrote" his solos and prided himself on reproducing them. I always just played whatever came to mind (solo wise). I've noticed the difference in Dave's and my lead styles: what a hoot. Dave=Ozzy, metal lead and Carl=Hendrix, jazz, blues lead. The intro/outro became a critical part (years later) of Whitey's "Guns , Bibles, and Beer." Man, I miss Richard. By the way, he did get quite ill at a show at Bundulees. We had (pre-show) listened (at Greg's house) to the *entire* Phillip Glass Opera "Einstein On The Beach" while tripping and drinking. It was enough to fuck with anyone's stomach!

MRR: A band from Tennessee called Deathreat recently did a cover of "Dear Sirs."

Carl: "Dear Sirs," a cover? Wild. I wrote 90% of the Koro stuff and the song that gets covered is by Dave and Scott! Hahaha. Dave and Scott also wrote "Blap!" Scott helped me a little with "1st Church" I think, but the rest was my adolescent angst.

MRR: How long after the EP did you wait until recording the *Speed Kills* LP?

Carl: *Speed Kills* both pre and post dated the EP. Ya see, we had no money to speak of at the time and had a 40+ song set list (30 minutes). So what we did was go into the studio and record all our tunes as if we were "live." I do not recall overdubbing anything. I believe we just said "roll the fuckin' tape" and played our whole set. It in my opinion is far better that the EP. *Speed Kills* was done in about six hours on a eight-track studio that recorded gospel music and some country. Wild scene! The EP took four hours and had a few overdubs on it. The EP falls short of *Speed Kills* for the reason that due to time constraints (minutes on a 45 record) we had to pick and choose the

tunes, and hell eight out of 40 just did not get it for us. We argued, bitched, moaned, about what the "right songs" would be. Therefore it is not an accurate account of Koro. Looking at read-outs of the tunes got a *big* laugh. The longest is "Dear Sirs" at 58 seconds and the shortest is "Acid" at 35 seconds! During mastering I use a two-second "break" between songs (easier to "read" and "hear" differences in E.Q. that way) with the added 12 second (two between each song) eight songs, still the damn thang clocks in at 6:17!!! No fuckin' wonder we used to play a 40 song set in 30 minutes.

MRR: Was there much of a scene left in Knoxville near the end of the band? How/why did you break up?

Carl: I effectively broke up the band in the 80s as (to me) it was feeling "too comfortable." Koro played a show without me, using most of my songs and a few new Dave tunes (later he would form a band The Wedge with his stuff). That pissed me off. Then I formed Red (a band I thought was broader in scope). We "broke up" Red every year for for six months to a year (called Red, Red II and Red III). That, as far as bands are concerned, is still my policy…I think you write your best shit as you "form." You should "hit the studio" then (four months or so). Then you get more familiar with one another, tour a bit, "hit the studio" again, play a few shows, and call it a day (so to speak). For me the studio is a means of documentation, *not* commerce. I have had many bands that:

1) toured a lot
2) never played a show
3) played locally a few times

The commonality in all those band is this, a "Sound-Document" was recorded by all of them, not for the intention of release but more for personal history.

MRR: After you document it (how) do you get it out there, and do you make a living off it?

Carl:A few times I have "gotten it out there," i.e: a few of my "post Red" bands such as Big Stickmen *Live in "J-Town.* Stickmen were a live band. By that I mean the stage was our place. Screamin' Boy Blue—self titled EP (regionally released), Whitey—"Guns, Bibles, Beer" (regionally released, then bootlegged). Band built 50% on the "groundwork" laid by Red, Red II and Red III was 30-Amp Fuse—Demo, yup, *the* 30-Amp Fuse. Odd story, I put together a band from a favorite drummer of mine and a "new-guy" bass player. Mike Smithers had been hanging around (trying to be in Red III once) and he and I had become friends. I was teaching him (over the years) how to play guitar and how to "write" (giving suggestions, etc.). He had previously been the r-git player for Screamin' Boy Blue, I thought he did a great job so I approached him about 30-amp (as yet unnamed). We recorded, gigged, and finally reached the point where I felt "trapped" by the band, and more importantly, did not want to tour, so I broke it up. Mike then got it back together, using my songs, and a few he was coming up with. I was very pissed for a while as this "fake" 30-Amp was bearing very little resemblance to the first version. Then I heard the CD, he did semi-OK, decent tunes and all. We kissed and made up. Still using the name (and fan base) was a calculated, full of shit move on Mike's part. More stuff I've put out: Birdhouse—"I'm Your Huckleberry" (regional), an answer to both Red and Screamin' Boy Blue, with excellent players, a great "power trio." Pre-Koro Bands: DOC-Wog, a cassette is all, Trivia Birds, again only a cassette.

MRR: What did the members do after Koro? Was/is anyone still involved in the scene, or did you all just move on in life?

Carl: I'm unsure whether Dave *still* plays with the Dickies, but he did last I heard. Why? I dunno, I burned out on 'em in the late 70s/early 80s. Scott—mmmmm—yeah that's what I heard...after trying to be a model overseas and having a wreck, he was always flakey, haha... Naw, I don't talk to the old crew anymore. I guess we lost track. Ron went to law school and Bill (pussy) still does "hair-metal" bands. I would love to talk with them someday. Those Chemo shots can make me a bit "pissy" at times... what I said was true but here's the whole story:

Koro had a shot at being on Frontier Records due to the Circle Jerks and we were gonna go to LA with them (and, I think, TSOL). Bill missed his girlfriend and refused to tour. I got very pissed and said "fuck it, why be a band !?" I thought we had broken up. The rest of the guys "reformed" without me for a few shows. That really pissed me off, as I had written over 80% of our material. During this time I was also expanding what I wanted to do musically with my new 3-piece band Red. We wrote a song about my songs being lifted and the "fake Koro" disappeared. In retrospect I suppose the guys just wanted/needed the cash. and the name helped. Dave later formed "The Wedge" and we were pals once again. Bill took the "path of least resistance" and joined "HardKnox" a local lame hair band, then moved to Nashville to drum for Valentine Saloon. His playing suffered from lack of challenge and we all lost track/made fun of/with him. Red got real big regionally, but had to reform three times due to (another) Bill (dr) going to Australia to make tons o' cash in USA type bar bands.. So I had other bands in the "lag-times" between Red reunions. Ron, Dave, and I remained close. Scott moved overseas to be a model and (I heard) was in a bad wreck scarring his face. He was always the new-agey type so yeah, that sounds right. Jon Wallace (STD's) and I where forming a crazed punk/funk/jazz/hardcore thang called Whitey complete with horns and dancers! Our bassist (another) Scott had to move to Atlanta and our drummer (Rodney) succumbed to heroin addiction. Not wanting to give up Jon and I got Ron, who was by then an incredible bassist, to replace Scott and Lawson Yager (Betty Rocker) for drums. We got big regionally, then I showed my ass/ego by suggesting I do the vocals also (like in Red)...end of Whitey. So I formed 30-AMP FUSE, with a guitar player who was a Red freak. I got bored with the band (Rodney was back and smacked as usual) and quit. He (name withheld) stole the name and half my tunes, hooked up with Bill from ALL and did a CD, even after kicking his ass I had a bad taste in my mouth. Regarding the music business...it began to be too much business, so I formed Birdhouse, a band with one objective: fun. We wrote great shit vowing never to play live (we did once...out of state). Just write and record. Half of those guys had to make career moves to other cities. So, since I play 20+ instruments, I decided to go further underground recording stuff under odd names and selling CDs in San Fran, haha!!! Also doing orchestral, and "performance pieces" for events in SF, NYC, and here...Ron, well he got very into being a law guy and last I heard had passed the bar exam! I am real happy for him. After Wedge, Dave moved to LA and started Muzza Chunka, a metalish HC band who I thought was OK but not up to his talent. We lost touch due to distance. I would love to talk to him sometime again, we where tight as fuck for so long and he was a hell of a nice guy.

MRR: Are you surprised that anyone still cares about your old band?

Carl: No, not really. I mean I still love the Big Boys , Descendents/All, SLF, XTC, The Damned, Ruts, Skids, Offenders, and on and on and on.... People would ask about doing a reunion, but:

1, I won't tour (but never say never),
2. I could easily relearn and play the stuff now but I just can't be pissed and 16 at 35,
3. It ain't the early 80s,
4. I saw what happened when Buzzcocks, Misfits , Eagles, and so on,
5. To quote Neil Young, "its better to burn out, than to fade away,"
6. No, I don't think it would happen.

So there's the story of Koro, and a partial look into the life of its founder Carl Snow. I was glad to get to know Carl and to help shed some light on the mystery that is Koro.

BLOCKO BLOCKO

Interview by Will Threenote

I think it maybe it started with Snuff (when not doing chas & dave tunes), super distorted guitars, dakka dakka snare, pummely plunky bass and the sing yourself hoarse verse and chorus. Southport and the eloquently named Gun's & Wankers, China drum for about two singles, then there's your Leatherface don't get me started on how much I love Leatherface.... You see there's a glorious heart straining UK punk sound that's just as discernable as say US west coast/ socal punk (you know that tuneful epifat stuff that was in, then out, then in, etc) but not enough people seem to know about it....

Blocko are ace. Blocko like that UK pop punk sound I'm talking about. They get compared to lots of bands you probably haven't heard off, Broccoli and Hooton 3 Car in particular. All you need to know is Broccoli where ace, Hooton 3 Car where ace and Blocko are 'kin ace, ACE! E-mailing the band (Nij, snarling guitar & vox, Lloyd, plunky bass, and Mates, machine gun snare) I endeavoured to discover more about the six legged beast they call Blocko. What I found left me with a big cheesy grin!

MRR: You'd think maybe a band would be tired of the same comparisons cropping up in reviews (especially ones that only about five people might be able to relate to), but no! I asked whether they felt such comparisons might limit the amount of interest in the band?

Lloyd: "I'd hope that it might firstly link us to a particularly "British" sound, and secondly that it might encourage people who are unaware of these bands to perhaps give them a listen. Their recordings would be far greater appreciated now than they were at the time, because the interest in "punk" has grown so massively over the last few years. It also makes us kinda unique, as most UK bands seem to have comparisons made with their US cousins - so I can only see good it in."

MRR: I didn't think of that.

Mates then adds: "We've never sat down and said 'let's 'rip off' this or that', it's just the way we sound as a band and if people say we sound like those other bands then I take it as a welcome compliment and I don't think it has hindered us in any way I know people have gone back and bought/listened to 'those' bands because of the sound we have and that's great."

MRR: So it dawns on me they're missionarys spreading the good word. The soul soaring goodness must be heard throughout the land! How far can they spread the word? I wondered whether they might be trapped, playing the same venues over and over (something I've seen many bands that have a promising start end up doing)?

Lloyd: "Fortunately not. Whilst their are a core of good venues to play which we enjoy playing at, I think of the next few gigs we have lined up, we've only played at a couple before, so it is exciting to play new places with new faces. I think again this is an indication of how big the punk 'scene' is now, that people are willing to put on gigs in their towns, and that there are people there who will come out and support these. It also mirrors the fact that we do try hard to get out

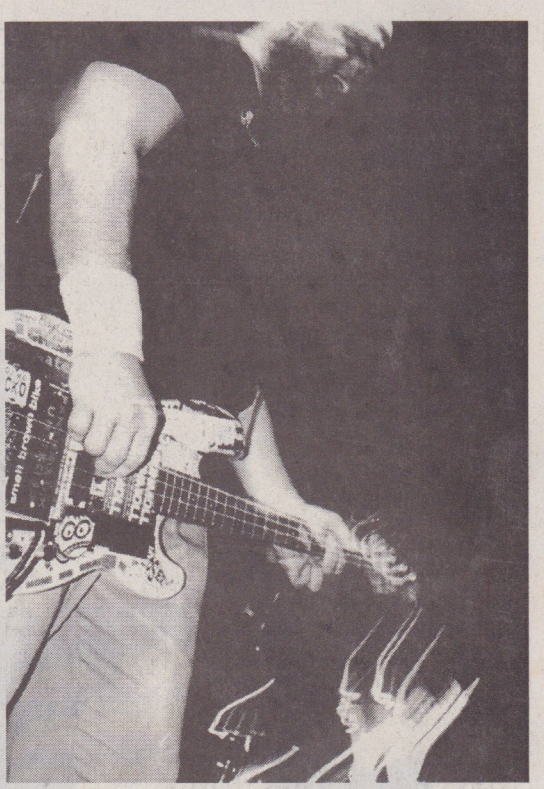
and play when and wherever we can, and that we appreciate the efforts of those involved in running the gigs and those turning up as much as we hope they appreciate ours. Hopefully people find us friendly and approachable, they pass this on to their fellow friends and promoters, and they then get in touch with us. We're doing part of the Strike Anywhere tour later in the year, and that might be a week in Germany, and we'd love to get over to Japan after our full length is released there. We're open to anything pretty much."

MRR: What about 'preaching to the converted', well not really the converted the 'mildy interested cos your our friends' crowd, in general I reckon 'friends don't dance', how do Blocko feel about that?

Nij admits: "A fresh perspective on our music from people who've never seen us would be good. It can sometimes feel like you're playing to a loosely biased crowd. It would be nice to hear what people honestly think of our live gigs and the new songs included in our set."

Mates: "The way I see it is if the band are your friends then you like them on a different level, what made you like them initially is that they're your friends and that helps you keep liking them even if it's not what you would normally listen to. I must admit I've danced to friends bands, it's fun more people should!" (This reminds me of the sight of Mates making a heroic leap from the stage during the last tune of a Joe Ninety set here in Leeds, the man does not lie!)

Lloyd puts this into perspective though: "When we first started playing, and the same holds true now, if we found that one person had enjoyed what they'd heard, that made it all worthwhile.....As for dancing at gigs, you'll still find me at the front, singing, clapping, drinking, smiling, although dancing is now very rare on a personal level! If people can enjoy the music, how they show their appreciation is up to them. Recently the people who I've ended up talking to about the band and how much they enjoyed themselves after gigs have been people I hadn't noticed whilst we were playing, so it goes to show that a load of people swirling around in your face is not necessarily a gauge to whether people enjoyed your set or not." (I figure the Lloyd not dancing thing is probably for the best, he's a big lad is Lloyd!).



MRR: So what's next for Blocko, plenty of gigs by the sound of it and releases? I noted they'd been asking around on some web forums for pictures...

Lloyd & Mates: "The pictures are for a compilation CD which our Canadian label (Does Everyone Stare?) is releasing soon in North America. We've also got a few split 7"s planned - one with waterslide in Japan which should be out very soon (on Waterslide), one in this country on Wakusei Records, who just released the Dead Inside 10" vinyl version of their album. It should be with a quality American band - currently a choice between two! And one with a 'Bombed Out' band hopefully. Later in the summer we should be doing an album ourselves."

MRR: Excellent! Loads of stuff to look forward to then. What about lyrics? They've been an omittion from releases to date, I want to be sure I'm doing the awesome 'rabbit punch' justice as I holler along,

Nij: "A handful of people have mentioned the lyrics recently so they'll probably go on the next record.... Rabbit punch is about a sudden realisation of one's self (It was me being eloquent)".

MRR: So Blocko, they're fuckin ace aren't they! But what shall we call this divine musical genre, what's a fitting name for this glorious good they spread? Perhaps the title of there first ep holds the answer.....

Lloyd & Mates: "[it]'s the coupling of "oi!" and "emo" to create a new genre, OIMO - skinheads with hearts! We are the self styled leaders of this new scene!"

Not to sure about that one boys! Oimo is a smart release though, it's like Blocko, ACE!

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AMDI PETERSENS ARME

interview by michael thorn
photos by susan punk

AMDI PETERSENS ARME are quite possibly one of the best hardcore bands I've heard or seen in years. Totally raw buzzsaw guitars, snarled vocals, and a rather unique rythamic attack combining to create a brutal hardcore attack. Needless to say I couldn't pass up the chance to sit down with them when they rolled through the Bay Area. Here's what they had to say…

MRR: Name and instrument…

Rasmuth: I play drums…

Peter: I sing, and I play guitar on the record

Thomas: I play the bass…

Morten: I play guitar

MRR: How long have you been together? And what bands were you in before?

Thomas: Peter and Ras started the band in 1998.

Peter: We got together and started talking about making a band. We really hadn't ever played before. We've been around for like four years but really there's been a lot of breaks. Ras lived in the States, and there's been this and that, and before we came here we had really only been musically active, touring and whatever, for like eight months. We hadn't really been in any bands before.

Thomas: Yeah, this is really the first band that really ever toured or played that I've been in.

MRR: What about INTENSITY?

Thomas: I was doing this before and they asked me to play drums.

MRR: When the first EP came in, it was pretty distinctly, for lack of a better way of putting it, old-sounding. What made you decide to play that sort of style, as opposed to something more modern sounding?

Peter: We didn't know that-we didn't know anything. This is punk to us, the way we listen to it. It wasn't a choice, really, it was just the way it is. When we bought that Dischord *Four Seven Inches On A Twelve Inch*, we just thought "fuck, we can pull this off, play fast…" This is the band that we wanted to play in, this is the way we learned to play.

Rasmuth: It's not original or anything, but I don't think that it is less original than any new bands. New bands are seemingly more inspired by new bands; we were inspired by the old bands.

Thomas: We hadn't even heard the term "old school."

MRR: I thought it was more honest sounding, more so than a lot of the bands I hear that try to play old school hardcore. One of the things that made your record more exciting is that it seemed a little more sincere.

Morten: I think what you said about new school, old school…people listen to records and are just like, "I want to play 88 style," or whatever year.

Rasmuth: They pick a certain style and they stick to it and are like, "we can't play that riff, it's not hardcore." It has to be always fast.

Peter: It seems a lot of new bands are very inspired by metal. I for one was never really into metal. Pretty much all the music that I like, whether it's punk or whatever, is old music.

MRR: I know that I've been fucking with you for liking a broad range of things like Flipper or The Birthday Party or whatever, but I think it shows when it comes to the songwriting, because it doesn't come off like you're trying to imitate this old hardcore band or that.

Rasmuth: We're into a lot of different bands. I haven't written too many APA songs, but we always grab from a lot of influences and it has never been about copying anything, it's just been about playing something that appeals to you and saying, "this is what I like," and taking it from there. It's sort of how I live my life and it's just sort of passes on to the music or whatever else. I don't really listen to that much 1-2-3-4 punk anymore-my tastes have just kind of developed over time.

MRR: In punk these days, people are just sort of like, "I only like these bands, 'cause I only like hardcore or garage," or whatever…

Rasmuth: It's not like that at all-it's just that this is all we knew when we started. This is what appealed to our lives.

Morten: I mean, when you look at the so-called old school bands, they didn't have many punk bands to listen to, they just had a lot of rocknroll. When they wanted to play in their own bands and when they started playing in all the areas all over the world, they didn't say, "we're going to make punk or make hardcore," they just did it. A lot of the new bands don't want to just play music or express themselves, they want to play in a way that imitates bands and fits a style.

Peter: We talk about what people listen to and what inspires them and what they get their inspiration, like the Misfits, they were inspired by horror films, but a new band doing that kind of stuff would be inspired by the Misfits and then get into horror films. Seems like a lot of people today, it doesn't matter if it's music, movies, or comic books, they are inspired by people who already did it instead of being inspired by the things around them, and I think that shows. That's why I love the things that are around Copenhagen. Over here you can get t-shirts, pins, and patches-you can get fucking nothing in Denmark. I remember starting out, I didn't know fucking nothing yet but a Dead Kennedy's album. You start off there and you just get so much more creative by that. Over here it just seems like young kids come and repeating the whole cycle, adapting to the style, but in Denmark you see the young kids coming into Copenhagen from the suburbs and there is something weird about them, they've been fucked with because they choose to look that way or think that way, and that's the honesty that I'm looking for. I'm not looking for a t-shirt, I'm not looking for a fucking style of music. I just want to see people expressing themselves…

MRR: I think that it's true in some respects that it's a formula, you buy into it. It's a choice that you're going to be this kind of punk and these are the kind clothes I wear and these are the bands I like and so on. I think that's why we'll never see another band like the Big Boys, for example, unless it's a band that just tries to rip off the Big Boys.

Rasmuth: You just wait, 'cause it'll be hot at some point and people will just try to play funk and shit…

MRR: Dear God help us (laughter). I wanted to talk to you guys about Copenhagen as a scene-what is it like there? What are the shows like? Where do you do the shows at?

Thomas: Most of the shows happen at Ungdomshuset-the youth house. It's a squat and is really one of the only places with DIY shows. There was another place that got shut down. Then there are a few other places that are bigger but aren't really good for small bands, then there is this one new place that is a bar that is actually kind of cool because they pay the bands really well and is free to get in. The bands there are normally pretty good. I mean I would still like to see more original stuff, but…

Morten: The Copenhagen scene has really exploded in the last two years or so…there's a lot of really good bands around and it's not just hardcore band after hardcore band, but everyone plays a little different kind of style and that's what I really like about Copenhagen. Personally, I think that Copenhagen has the best scene in the world 'cause there are so many fucking good bands…

Peter: I really think it has exploded. To me there's punkers and people who live like outcasts and all that, but there's not necessarily music to it, there's no soundtrack. But then this whole thing happened. I think that it's the best fucking thing I've seen anywhere out there…

Thomas: But I would like to see something even more…

Peter: I would like to see it go even beyond this…

Thomas: Plus there's a lot of new kids coming to the shows all the time because they see something exciting going on, as opposed to five years ago when there were no good bands around so it's like the kids weren't getting really inspired by anything.

Morten: I think that the scene in Copenhagen right now is as good as 1979 LA or 82 DC or whatever else. I mean the best shows in Copenhagen are the local bands.

Thomas: When touring bands come through, people go but they don't care about them as much as they do the locals…

MRR: I think that's kinda cool…

Rasmuth: Over here it seems like it's just music, it's just entertainment… you go to the show and then you go back home and that's what I really noticed from when I lived in San Francisco. Whereas I think it's something different in Europe. People don't go in the beginning just for the music. They don't go to squats or whatever… they go there for something else. Another thing is the whole punk scene is centered around the whole political aspect of squats. It causes problems, because sometimes you're in the media a lot, your whole underground world. So you have people who always want to fuck with you, not only the cops, but just people who want to kick your ass because of how you look or what you stand for and I think that sort of reflects a lot on the scene.

MRR: I think that San Francisco is sorta different than other parts of the country, though, it's a city where there's always been a massive punk scene, and it's really easy to be a punk here. You walk around on the streets and there's lots of people who look like they're punx here but have probably never been to a punk shows in their life. The thing is that to some extent it becomes just a fashion statement rather than this being a part of your life…

Peter: That's coming to Denmark as well…

Thomas: The part of Copenhagen where a lot of punks live, the artists…is sort of a harsh part of the city, but is now sort of being glamorized and commercialized as a cool place to live…but that is what is happening all over the world… T-shirts with Che Guevara…

Rasmuth: The whole street thing is fashionable and you can't buy that shit. I'm sorry but you can't-you can mimic it, that's for sure and that's what they are doing. Just two years ago you could really taste the urban lifestyle and the spirit and all this, but it's fucking dying out right now…

MRR: Do you all have jobs?

WHO IS AMDI PETERSEN?

Mogens Amdi Petersen, 63, was arrested by the FBI at Los Angeles International Airport on 17th February, 2002, after being more or less a fugitive for 22 years. He was picked up on an Interpol warrant alleging "serious economic crime" and is facing extradition to his native Denmark.

Bespectacled Petersen started his career as a teacher in the state school at Kroggaardsskolen, Odense, in 1962. He was allegedly dismissed "because of his long hair." He founded the Necessary Teacher Training College and Tvind Travelling High School in 1970, but withdrew from public life in 1979.

Rumours that he was dead-or even kept drugged- turned out to be nonsense: all along, it appears, Petersen was living in luxury and jet-setting between expensive homes in the Cayman Islands, Florida, Zimbabwe, Denmark and elsewhere. He was very much alive and running his world empire personally. His diktats came from Denmark, Florida and Zimbabwe by telephone, fax and encrypted email. He travelled round the world by scheduled passenger plane, leaving from airports in Germany and Holland.

Petersen's personal charisma is supposed to have attracted a "harem" of senior Tvind females, now themselves mostly middle-aged, known as '"Amdi's women." They were at his right-hand, in strong positions of authority in Tvind. Since Tvind disapproves of family life Petersen never married, but his girlfriend, Kirsten Larsen, still sticks by him.

For a while his base in the Caribbean was a beachside villa in the Cayman Islands. In mid-2001 he was located by the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in Miami Beach, where Tvind has apartments and until recently kept a luxury yacht.

What is Tvind?

Every Dane is familiar with Tvind. But exactly what is it? I find that this is not an easy question to anwer.

One of Denmark's television journalists, Thomas Stockholm, who has made the most extensive documentaries on Tvind, tells me: "There is not one definition. I would say it is a cult, it's a political organisation, even a charitable organisation. It's a chameleon. And at the same time they grow bigger and bigger."

Accused of being a cult, Tvind is now facing allegations of embezzling millions of pounds worth of public money.

Development of Tvind

Tvind started in the 60s as a group of radical young teachers.

The organisation derived its strength, particularly in the early days, from a unique provision in the Danish constitution that allows any organisation to run a school - and the state finances these schools. Tvind started lots of schools across Denmark.

Tvind functions along classic communal lines. At the centre of the organisation are the teachers - forming a sort of political cadre, who share not only their ideals and their time, but also their incomes.

The Tvind communal financial pot is used to fund a wide range of "good causes" and commercial concerns around the world. Over time, as Tvind grew and diversified, funds were merged and diverted into a complicated internal market. Projects include fighting Aids in Africa, commercial plantations in South America and second-hand clothes businesses wherever there is a market for them.

Yet Tvind is an organisation of stark contrasts. From early flower-power sensitivities in Denmark grew a global Tvind empire, a network of business-cum-charitable concerns whose stated aims were to "do good", to "make the world a better place" but which are also motivated by profit.

Tvind's Founder

A mysterious guru-figure and founding member of Tvind, Amdi Petersen, is alleged to be in charge of the money raised by Tvind, the "shared" money. According to estimates from Danish police documents Tvind is now worth at least 100 million pounds.

Yet, in a sinister twist, Amdi Petersen has been in hiding for 22 years.

"There's no doubt at all about who's at the top of Tvind", says Britta Rasmussen. She's another "escapee" of the Teachers' Group, the inner sanctum of Tvind.

She tries to explain why Petersen was such a compelling leader. "It was the eyes," she says, "he would fix you with his stare. He was a very brilliant speaker. He was like a god to us. We stopped reading newspapers. He was our only source of what was going on in the world."

A host of Danish journalists have been on Petersen's trail since his disappearance. In Autumn 2001 journalists linked him to a luxury penthouse in Miami - just one example of the luxurious lifestyle he is believed to have enjoyed. But Petersen remained elusive. News of Petersen's allies made his story even more tantalising to the Danish media. For many years he's been friend and ally to Robert Mugabe, who has helped him establish numerous money-making enterprises in Zimbabwe. Tvind has supported many "interesting" regimes over the years - from Pol Pot to Gaddafi.

The Investigation

Excerpted from *Denmark's Tvind* By Paul Henley BBC News/March 21, 2002

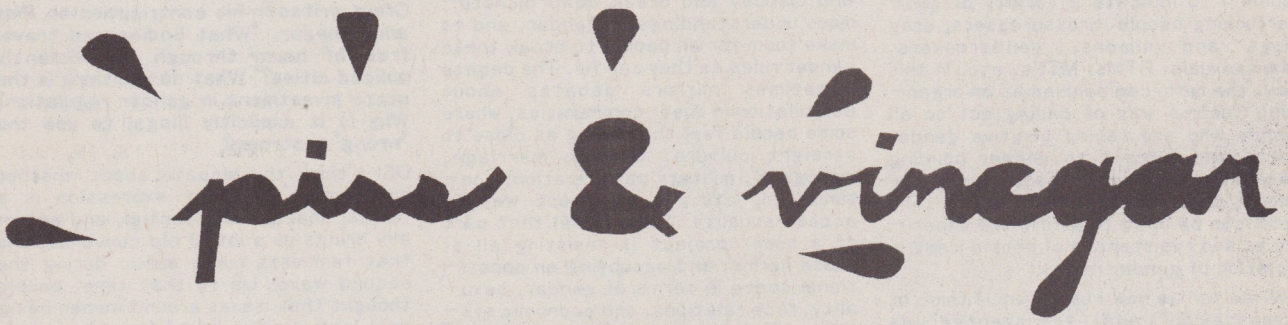
Denmark's Tvind was aired on BBC Radio 4 on Thursday 21st March 2002 at 11:00GMT. Listen to this programme and more Crossing Continents at www.bbc.co.uk/continents.

Thomas: I work part time…
Peter: You can get welfare, it's getting harder. They're making it harder to get a place to stay 'cause it's getting so expensive and it's hard…
Thomas: It's hard, 'cause you got to know somebody that already has a place…
Peter: Because if you sign up on a list to get a place the wait is almost like 20 years…
Morten: I still live with my parents-I've signed up, but the waiting time to get an apartment is between 23-35 years.
Peter: You can find apartments other ways…
Thomas: It's easy to get a room, like to rent a room in someone's apartment, but it's really hard to get your own place…
Rasmuth: You can get the room but you really have to pay for it.
Thomas: They can put the prices at whatever they want because people are desperate they want a place to stay…
MRR: OK, let's talk about the bands from Copenhagen…
Peter: Around the same time that we started, this band called Snipers started, they were kinda horror punk. A lot of people said they sounded like the Misfits, but I don't really think so. I mean they are into horror as well but I don't really think that they sound like them…they broke up not too long ago and the guy who wrote the songs for Snipers went onto another band he made a new band called No Hope For The Kids. It's kinda like Snipers were into horror stuff and this new band is all about war.
Rasmuth: It's their huge interest…
MRR: So what about other bands?
Rasmuth: While we're telling you about all this you got to remember that we're in a lot of different bands ourselves…
Morten: My favorite Copenhagen band is this band called Lokum which is kinda surf-horror-skate punk. They are going to make a twelve inch but I don't know…
Thomas: And a split seven inch.
Peter: Then there is Gorilla Angreb-that's a side project of us for when Thomas went on the Intensity tour… I think that there are some good songs to be found in there-it's really basic raw rocknroll stuff. Then there is Asbest-that's basic hardcore…
Rasmuth: Gudommelig Galskab…they're really good.
Peter: They take up some issues that aren't standard. They're really creative in their thinking…
Thomas: They have a personal perspective and it's not just like "war is wrong."
Peter: There's also another band that three of us are in called The Young Westerners-we just recorded a twelve inch and it should be out in a couple weeks.
Thomas: Then there is also going to be this twelve band compilation EP on KicknPunch. There will be Paragraf 119. I like them, other people in this room might not, but…
Peter: They fit in the scene, they should be there…
Thomas: There is this other band called Uro who are really inspired by the stuff that Paragraf 119 is doing, and there is a band called Aktiv DØsshjælp, that are like fast grind stuff.
Morten: There's Hul, which is my old band-I was the guitar player.
Peter: They made all their songs when they were like 13-14 years old…I think that they were really inspiring-they were really destructive in their performance-broken guitars and people bleeding…
MRR: Everyone probably asks who Amdi Petersen is, but I'm not going to do that…
Peter: Good… (laughter)
MRR: But I am going to ask you if you visited him in jail…
Rasmuth: No.
MRR: Why not?
Peter: We just didn't have time-we never have time to do anything…
Rasmuth: We talked about doing a show outside, but we were afraid that we would get arrested.
Peter: We talked about going and visiting him…
MRR: Have you thought about doing a benefit record or show?
Peter: No. It might be really fun, but I'd like to get a recording of him talking for a record…
Morten: He's on the front page of the news all the time…
Thomas: It's always worked out pretty much perfectly that anytime we start playing and being very active he's on the news…
Peter: We have all these newspapers with like "Amdi Petersen Strikes Again!" as a headline.
MRR: OK, let's wrap it up. You just had the new EP come out on Havoc, what else is in the works?
Thomas: Breaking up…
Peter: If we could get the chance to go to Japan we might do it but we've talked about breaking up before-it's hard to do, but we'd rather break up while we're still at our height than just sort of fade into crap…
Rasmuth: It's just weird 'cause we have long breaks all the time and there's been like six or seven different people playing guitar for us. We don't practice that much, so we don't write that many new songs and we all have other bands…
Morten: This band has already made two, in my opinion, fantastic seven inches, there's a lot of bands going around that just get caught up in the whole rocknroll trip of sticking together and putting out records just cause they are popular and can tour…and this band is about not doing all that. So doing another record or another tour just because we have the opportunity wouldn't be right…we should be doing just because we want it to happen.
MRR: Yeah, but you didn't even play on any of the records…
(laughter)
Thomas: Maybe we'll do another tour if we still think it is fun and we want to do it. The motivation is not just because we're popular now-we're not doing it because of that. That would be fake just to do it because of that. It wouldn't be real.
To get in touch with APA or to find out more about the Copenhagen scene write Kick n' Punch, PO Box 578, 2200 Copenhagen, Denmark

ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, DEAN SPADE HAD TO PEE.

So after six hours of protests in the BITTER NEW YORK CITY COLD outside the World Economic Forum, Dean and his affinity group entered Grand Central Station in search of relief. Dean entered the restroom marked "MEN'S" and was followed by a police officer, who demanded identification. Dean explained that he was in the right restroom, that he is transgender but understood the officer's confusion, and offered to use the premises quickly and leave. Craig Willse entered the bathroom after his friend and attempted to defuse the situation. When Dean attempted to leave the bathroom, however, THE POLICE OFFICER PUSHED HIM AGAINST THE WALL and called for back-up. Craig tried to intervene in the arrest and shouted for help. Both were arrested, and while leaving the bathroom another member of their group, Ananda LaVita, attempted to un-arrest Dean. All three were then dragged out of the train station.

The three were HELD FOR 23 HOURS in three different precincts. They were released on their own recognizance to a courtroom packed with friends and allies wearing "LIVING TRANS IN NOT A CRIME" stickers. Among the three of them, they were charged with multiple counts of disorderly conduct, trespassing, resisting arrest, and obstruction of government administration. While all charges were dropped at the following court appearance in March, Dean Spade (who is also a lawyer) and a number of other progressive legal organizations are pursuing the case to highlight the everyday violence of gender enforcement, transphobia, and its role in the maintenance of the state and capital. A ZINE WAS QUICKLY PRODUCED about the arrests called



and is distributed by the members of the ANTI-CAPITALIST TRANNY BRIGADE. (More details about the arrest are in the zine.) Mimi Nguyen chatted with Dean and Craig about the politics of transgender activism, and about the linkages between gender regulation, the state, and globalization.

MRR: The "commonsense" assumption about gender is that it is innate, a metaphysical substance which is hardwired into our genes or hormones or some more ethereal essence. Of course, a closer look would reveal that what counts as "appropriate" gender has always been negotiated and regulated, which would suggest that there is nothing "natural" about gender (or sexuality) after all. In the Western nations in the late 1800s it was suggested that education rotted the uterus, in the 1950s it was "obscene" for women to wear pants. What is your understanding of gender, and by extension, transgender?

Dean Spade (DS): I guess I see gender as a regulatory system—a hierarchical set of mandates that require certain people to do certain things at certain times—that orders the lives of everyone in ways that foreclose everyone's possibilities for fully inhabiting and self-determining our bodies and minds. As you point out, what those mandates are, and how they work, varies widely on cultural, racial, economic, and historical bases. In any arrangement, though, resources are distributed according to this regulatory system, and it is harshly enforced with consequences ranging from social stigma to death. Transgender, to me, is about disrupting those regulatory systems, and interacting with gender in a way that is specifically aimed at disruption. This means violating the two basic rules of gender: 1) that you can't change your gender identity, and 2) that you have to occupy a single gender category cohesively—meaning fully inhabiting the characteristics associated with "male" or "female." So, to engage transgender politics is to let go of these two rules, and to allow yourself and others to move within gendered meanings as we wish. It means using the pronouns people want to be used, calling people by names they want to be called, not telling them how they have to look or talk or act or move in order to conform to gender norms, and supporting changing the world so that the methods of coercion (social, legal, medical, educational) used to regulate gender are eliminated.

Craig Willse (CW): My understanding of gender is that, yes, it is obscene for women to wear pants! No really, I think gender is a lie. All gender is policing. All gender is about setting limits on what a body can look like, what a body can do in the world. If you feel bad about your body, about how you look, that's you feeling gender oppression. Though certainly some folks benefit more than others do from dichotomous gender regimes, and in fact some people access gender privilege quite well, for whom does gender really work? Whose gender is right? And I'm not only thinking here of people who obviously do gender wrong to great and sexy effects (like butches, fairies, genderqueers, andros, robots, etc.), but what straight guy doesn't spend his time worrying that he's too fat/too skinny, not tall enough, not macho enough? I also think we need to understand gender as variable in terms of race and class. Racism interacts with gender privilege, such that white maleness and Latino maleness bear very different costs and privileges.

I like to think of the "trans" in "transgender" as being an active element, an invitation to dynamically move across a field of gender, and not in only one direction. I hope that doesn't make me sound like a hippie, but I'm trying to point out that everyone's gender is trans. We all understand our bodies in relation to movement, and this is often painful and policing (a vertical movement that places some better gendered bodies above ours, some wrong bodies below ours, with us trying to claw our way to the top). But that movement can also be horizontal, improvised, unplanned and changing. Doesn't the second option sound like more fun?

MRR: And to clarify, what is the relationship between transgender and transsexuality? Where do queer debates about butch/femme, androgyny and drag fit in—or not?

PISS & VINEGAR CONT.

DS: "Transsexual" is a term that is mostly associated with the medical model of understanding people whose gender identities are contrary to the gender they are assigned at birth, and who seek medical intervention in the form of surgery and/or hormones in order to change their gendered characteristics and live in their new gender identity. Many trans people are adverse to this term, or feel it is too constrictive, because it is used in a medical context in which we are pathologized and considered mentally ill. The term transgender has emerged to indicate a broader variety of experiences. Many people use it as an umbrella term (like "queer") to indicate a variety of genderfucking people: crossdressers, drag kings and queens, genderqueers, transsexuals, FTMs, MTFs, etc. In this way, the term can be used as an organizing tool—a way of calling out to all people who are facing punitive gender norms and subject to gender policing because our gender presentations make people uncomfortable and angry. The term can be used to affirm the experiences and resistances of people living in violation of gender norms.

CW: As far as how I use them, I think of "transsexual" and "transgender" as roughly parallel with the terms "homosexual" and "queer." So, transsexuality and homosexuality reference a pathologized understanding of sex/gender, and both are closed terms—they serve to mark out a small, aberrant group of people from the "general public" against whose normalcy perverts are defined. In contrast, "transgender" (or simply "trans") and "queer" are more politicized terms that signal an oppositional stance to sex/gender regulation and hierarchy. They are open, not closed, in the sense that a transgender identity is not confined to someone who has surgery, or passes, or feels like they are trapped in the wrong body; and queer is not about fucking someone of the "opposite" gender, but fucking gender and dislocating sex from romanticized, heteronormative constructions. Of course, queer has been used in totally reductive ways as a synonym for "gay" by marketers and mainstream groups, and some trans people call themselves "transsexual" but challenge in their lives and politics medical conceptions of coherent gender. Language is always strategic, so the meaning of these terms shift in different contexts, and any word can take on oppressive weight or liberatory potential.

MRR: What are the politics of "passing" and "legitimacy"? What are their uses and limitations?

DS: One of the debates that goes on within trans communities that mirrors debates in many other communities is about how much we should conform to norms in order to gain legitimacy in the eyes of a transphobic world. There is a long history of the medical professions corralling us into gender norms in order to justify their role in our transitions. A "successful" trans person is seen by the medical world often to be one who passes as non-trans, and who is taken by most people as a stunning example of normative maleness or femaleness. Some people feel that this is the safest route for trans people to take, and that if we want legal protections and an end to bias, we should try to be as normal as possible in order to convince others that we deserve this inclusion. Others of us feel, however, that the proper response to normalizing legal and medical structure is to fight, to stand out as people who disobey and break down dichotomous understandings of gender, and to make room for all people to break these gender rules as they see fit. The debate sometimes mirrors debates about assimilation in queer communities, where some people feel that being as close to straight culture, through marriage, monogamy, military participation, consumerism, etc., is the best way to access equality. Others feel that part of a queer project is resisting all of those norms, and occupying an oppositional space in terms of gender, sexuality, race relations, and economic systems. Sometimes the "assimilationist" approach is associated with a desire to trace sexual orientation to some biological source—a kind of "we can't help it" argument. Similar arguments are made in trans communities. Clearly, my view on these questions is that we should be opposing systems of gender policing in as broad and comprehensive a way as possible, rather than carving out new narrow spaces where only the most normative queers and trannies can be accepted.

CW: We get to this a bit later, but I think the most frustrating response to our case has been trans folks who have basically said, "if you passed this wouldn't have happened, and if you won't do what it takes to pass (spend money on surgery and hormones, perform the most ultra-conservative preppie masculinity, banish all queer forms of femininity from your self) then you have yourself to blame." Assholes who say this shit should sign up for the NYPD, because they'd do great work at Grand Central.

Our demand is not for more people to be comfortable in a binary gender system, it's for an end to the real and daily violence of that system. So in terms of bathrooms this means we want all people, all genderfuckers, to be able to use public restrooms safely and with dignity. Everyone deserves to live a full, complete life in this city. To suggest otherwise is to tell genderqueers to disappear—to say, don't leave your home, don't ever eat or drink anything when you're out because you don't deserve access to a bathroom, don't expect not to get your ass kicked on the street. To call yourself trans or a trans-ally and abandon people who transgress normative gender (intentionally or otherwise) is to play right into the right-wing design to remake New York into a suburban shopping mall for the exclusive enjoyment of white straight consumers. And if you don't see that, or you don't care, you're a fucking idiot.

MRR: The assumption is often made that gender or transgender issues are merely "personal" issues with no bearing on larger social forces. Clearly your arrests would suggest otherwise—that public space is a contested site for those who transgress gender norms. As Craig writes in his contribution to *Piss and Vinegar*, "What bodies can travel free of harm through our violently policed cities?" What do you think is the state investment in gender regulation? Why is it explicitly illegal to use the "wrong" restroom?

DS: I think this debate about whether one person's gender expression is a "trivial" matter is essential, and actually brings up a lot of old conversations that feminists made public during the second wave. Up to that time, people thought that issues around women being paid less, women being forced to wear restrictive or sexualizing clothing to work, women being systemically harassed in the workplace, and the like were trivial, personal, and individualized. It was only through a lot of organized effort that more and more people came to see that gender hierarchy had deep impacts on all women, and all men as well, restricting everyone's ability to survive, avoid violence, marry or divorce as they wanted, have kids when they wanted, etc. Similarly, when you look at trans issues as being about the narrow issue of whether one person gets to be called by a certain name or use a certain bathroom, it can seem trivial. However, when you look at how all people are subject to extreme regulation on broad scales like the law as well as narrow issues like what we wear and how and who we fuck, you begin to see that a struggle for transliberation and a deregulation of gender is a struggle to end a lot of systemic violence and suffering. I see where a lot of struggles fit into this, like the struggle over low-income women of color being disproportionately tested and then jailed for having drugs in their systems while pregnant, or conversations about compulsory circumcision for male and female babies, or struggles over rights for immigrant domestic workers working independently in wealthy homes for below survival wages. All of these struggles have some part that is about compulsory enforcement of gendered norms onto the bodies of people, to their extreme detriment. They are also intimately connected with racial and economic privilege, and I see that as an essential component of any inquiry into

how gender policing occurs, because it does not occur on the same terms for people in different economic, racial or immigration statuses. The state investment in gender, like in hierarchical systems of race, immigration, and income, is that it is a regulating opportunity whereby the regulation itself becomes invisible or assumed to be natural, when in reality it is an artificial condition of oppression.

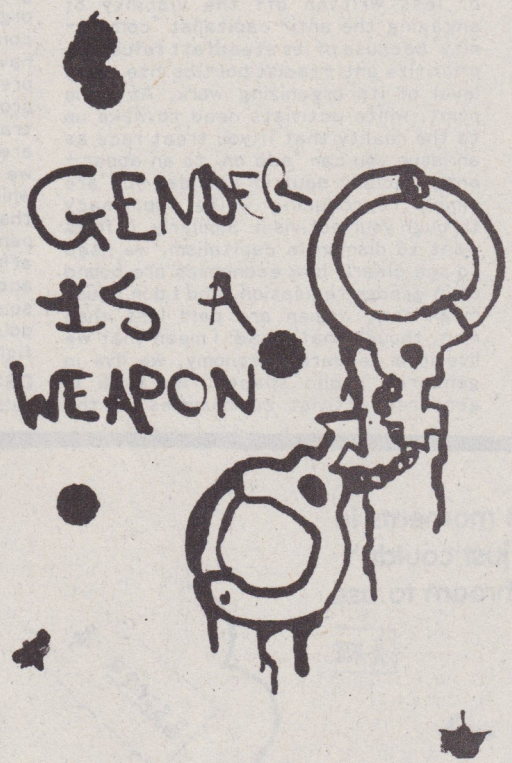
CW: I think one aspect of the state's investment in gender regulation stems from a keen interest (to put it mildly) in the maintenance and reproduction of capitalism. Gender regulation is big business. Normative gender regimes create and multiply consumer needs—clothes, make-up, gym memberships, sports cars—that are marketed along gendered lines. Why sell just one kind of deodorant when you could sell two—one strong enough for a man, but made for a woman! People in the US grow up believing their gender presentation will never be good enough, but it can be made better through shopping. Men's and women's magazines, men's and women's watches, men's and women's entertainment—these commodities don't simply meet a consumer need, they create and perpetuate gendered consumer markets. We grow into the shapes that markets trace.

MRR: What does it take to be good trans allies?

DS: Good trans allies do more than use the right terms or come to a drag show. Being a good trans ally, like being a good activist in general, involves thinking personally about ideas and applying them to your own life in an intimate way. It means being as invested in transliberation as you think a trans person is, and working as closely to uncover how you participate in gender regulation as you can. So much of gender policing occurs in ways that seem trivial or personal, and it requires each of us to really take apart our minds and find the locations of these norms in order to create safe spaces for new gender actualizations to thrive.

CW: In my efforts to be a good trans ally, I've tried to start out by being honest about what buttons of mine trans issues push. And I've tried to interrogate those hot spots on my own, without projecting them on to trans people or asking trans people to guide me through my learning process. Don't ask trans people if they've had surgery, what their families say, how they expect to get a job—if a trans person trusts you and thinks they will get something out of that conversation, they will start that dialogue. I've also tried to share some of the burdens that trans people deal with as far as educating and challenging non-trans people. If I invite someone to me and Dean's home, I let them know before they come that we live in a trans and transpositive house, and we expect people's politics to meet those standards. I talk to people who fuck up pronouns. In group settings, I make an extra effort to use lots of gendered terms when referring to trans people present, so new people in the crowd will have an example to follow and won't use "wrong" pronouns because they're making incorrect assumptions about someone's gender. I also don't think I've figured it all out, I expect to make mistakes and though I won't beat myself up for not being perfect, I demand of myself a commitment to doing hard work.

And I think being a good trans ally means simply taking these issues seriously.



art by Andy

Think of every moment of every day that someone addresses you by your gender, and think how easy and comfortable that feels. Think about giving that comfort up. If that doesn't seem like a big deal to you, recognize how many lives you are conveniently dismissing.

MRR: What was the general response to your arrests?

DS: We received hundreds of emails from all over the world from people who were shocked by what happened and pledged their support for our case. The emails varied, some from trans people, some from cops, some from queers, and some from anti-capitalists who had never thought about trans issues before but were seeing the connections between their work and trans struggles for the first time. There were also some responses that were negative. Some people wrote to message boards that they thought the arrest was my fault for refusing to show I.D. and that I should have complied with the cop's (illegal) requirements. Others wrote that it was my fault for not passing as a man more, and that I shouldn't use the men's room if I wasn't going to pass. Of course, this is a ridiculous position because I have been kicked out of both men's and women's restrooms, so the only answer I guess would be to never use restrooms since I don't look enough like a man or a woman to fit in either room all the time. These negative responses were very hard to hear, of course it always sucks to have something violent and awful happen to you and then be told it's your fault, but the positive and supportive responses far outweighed the negative. Also, the negative responses created a great opportunity to start conversations in trans and non-trans spaces about what it means to resist police state practices and how we can work to have a broad view of transliberation that includes rights for all trans people, not just those who "pass" as non-trans men or women.

CW: Though some people have been assholes, the response has been mostly really supportive and outraged. It has been a cool opportunity for people to get politicized around trans issues, and I'm thankful for the mechanisms put in place by the People's Law Collective, Another World is Possible, the Anti-Capitalist Convergence, and Indymedia that have provided resources and also offered a means of outreach for us.

MRR: In *Piss & Vinegar* you publish some of the comments posted on the *Indymedia* messageboard, many of which seem to endorse state regulation of gender. The most contradictory comments (coming from a loose community based around anti-globalization protests) seemed to suggest that because you were engaging in "inappropriate social behavior" or "illegal activities" that you "deserved" to be arrested, or "should have known better!" What do you make of these responses, in terms of their regularity in the anti-globalization movement (or on the left in general) and their seeming incoherence with a radical agenda?

DS: See above.

CW: To me, the response that we shouldn't have engaged "illegal" activities is not too surprising, but pretty disturbing nonetheless. It's both a disavowal of the seriousness of gender violence and a total commitment to carrying out the state's police functions.

I don't know if people outside New York heard much about this, and I hope its not too tangential, but just before the WEF, the city and press circulated information about an ancient local law prohibiting three or more people to wear masks in public together. Obviously, this was a scare tactic aimed at intimidat-

ing black bloc folks, and a divide and conquer strategy since of course people were going to have different responses to the law. And it worked. I wore a bandana across my face for much of the protest, both in solidarity with black bloc activists and to hide my face from the cops who were there openly and illegally photographing the crowd. And I got shouted at by other protesters over and over, scolding me, yelling at me that I should take off my mask or the cops were gonna get me. And I was like, well, thanks, I feel real safe now that you've just drawn the attention of two dozen people to me. And this also relates to debates about property destruction, and the eagerness of many activists not simply to say they won't do property destruction, but to interfere with, condemn, ostracize, and even snitch on activists who do. This reminds me of a comment made by the brilliant legal activist Natsu Saito regarding armed resistance, which is that if you don't support it, fine, but don't do the job of the police for them by subverting efforts of people who do. This connects for me because it points out that specious arguments about moral superiority are not the exclusive terrain of right-wing governments, but are recreated to greatly debilitating effects by activists ourselves.

MRR: Do you think these comments reflect a particular tendency in earlier leftist social movements of the 1960s and 70s, which similarly dismissed feminist and queer concerns?

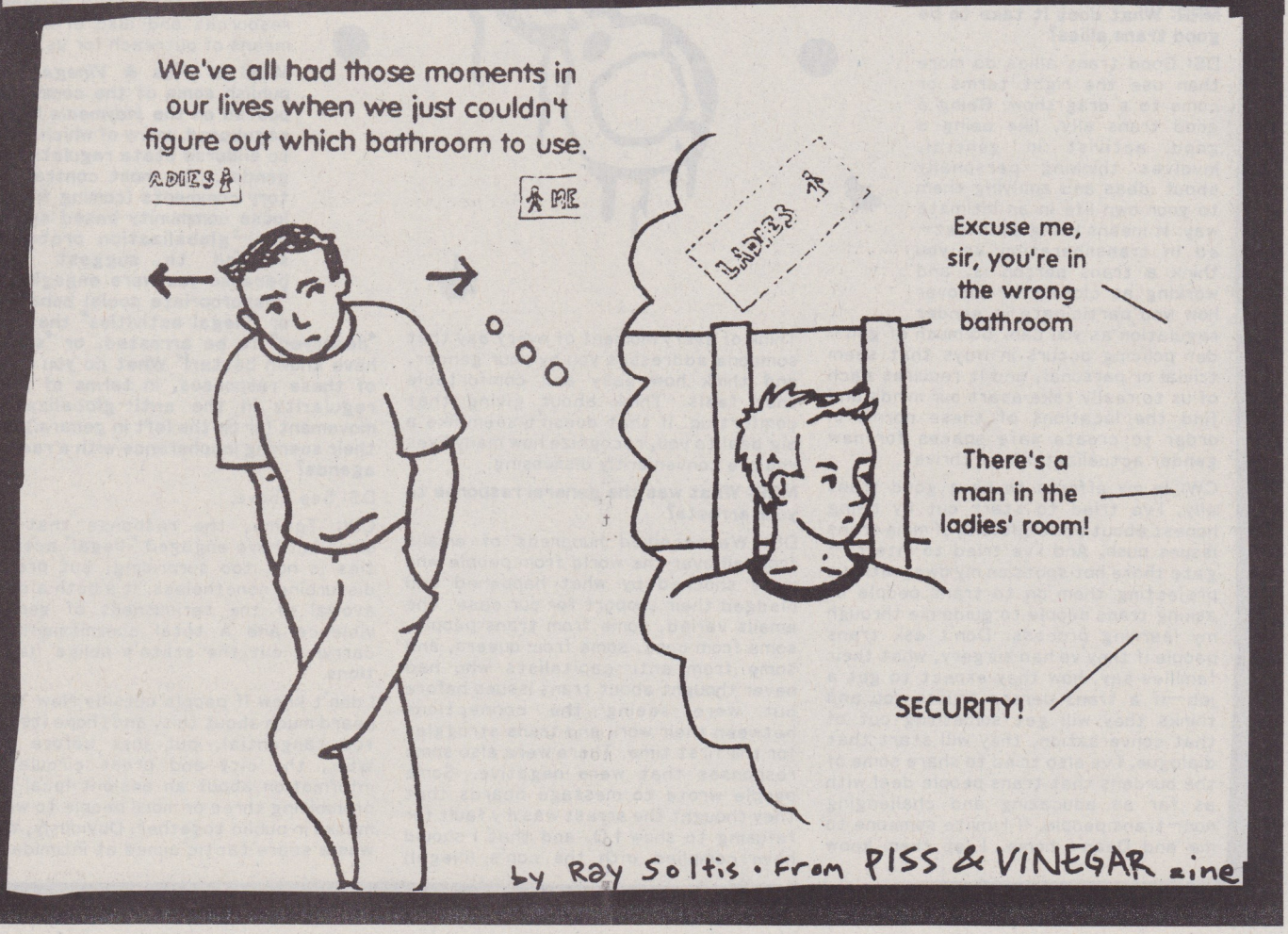
DS: Yes, to a certain degree I think the comments are made by people who think that anyone who "makes themselves vulnerable" to police harassment by being nonnormative in appearance is to blame for that. This represents to me a full failure to seek a broader vision of activism or justice that would decry police harassment and brutality against *anyone*, not just people who are keeping in line with gender norms. I mean, it's hard for me to see a point in being part of a movement that only includes me to the extent that I hide myself and make myself look like its more gender-normative (privileged) members.

CW: The whole conversation about what activists do and do not have time for is getting pretty tired. I know that many activists of color in New York have more or less written off the viability of engaging the anti-capitalist "community" because of its steadfast refusal to prioritize anti-racist politics into every level of its organizing work. At some point, white activists need to wake up to the reality that if you treat race as an issue you can "add on" to an apparently racially neutral agenda, you are simply reproducing white supremacy through your activism. Similarly, if folks want to dismantle capitalism, we need to see clearly how economics are bound up in gender regulation, and I don't just mean that women are paid less than men, though that's bad. I mean that we live in a gendered economy, we live in gendered public spaces, we work in gendered activist communities. If the world you are fighting to create does not intimately concern itself with the poverty of non-passing, genderqueer, homeless youth of color—what's the point? If you create a world in which middle-class white boys are free to drop out and dumpster dive, well great, but recognize how small that world is and how many people's needs it doesn't begin to address.

MRR: What is the next step for all of you after the charges were dismissed?

CW: We're looking into suing the city for false arrest and just general unpleasantness. I have some hesitation about jumping into a lawsuit—I don't think going to court is the fast path to justice by any means, and I think our culture's obsessive litigiousness is kinda gross—but I think it will be a good organizing opportunity, a chance to continue building the connections that have arisen out of our arrests. We're in pretty privileged positions, being white professional-class people, while most trans people who endure police violence are poor, homeless, or of color. So I hope we can responsibly use the resources to which we have access to make clear that this is not just about what happened to us, but about a system that affects lots of other folks more directly and pervasively. And maybe we can squeeze some money out of the city that could then be used to help fund groups fighting police and prisons in New York.

DS: We intend to bring a civil suit for false arrest and false imprisonment,



and to try to use the suit to seek policy changes in police practices. I am currently starting a law project in NYC focused on concerns of low-income trans people. A big part of that project will be trying to get training for cops and lawyers so that trans people will encounter less humiliation and violence in the criminal system. Some cities, like Portland OR, have training for cops and special procedures outlined for when trans people get arrested so that they don't face special dangers in strip-searching and confinement. I'd like to work to develop policies to protect trans arrestees in NY, and also work to make sure trans people don't experience the kind of blatant transphobia I received from my court-appointed lawyer at the arraignment. I know that a lot of public interest lawyers are unaware of the concerns and experiences of trans people, and may often unintentionally practice law in a way that really disserves trans clients. I'm hoping I can intervene on that with training, and also I'll be representing trans clients myself in poverty contexts.

MRR: What was the impetus for the zine *MAKE*, your first collaboration?

CW: We aim to seduce young and impressionable minds with our big words and dramatic writing.

Make is a sporadic zine and more consistent website (makezine.org) of rants and reflections on politics and organizing. We talk about queer stuff, economic justice, racism and white supremacy, cultural politics, affirmative action, and other juicy topics.

You know how people always dismiss some kinds of activism as "preaching to the converted?" Well, preach to the converted is exactly what I want to do with *Make*. Like you've said, basic 101 intro conversations are necessary, but also tiring. And I'm motivated by what happens in conversations between people who share an interest in complicated politics that take off from an assumption that racism, poverty and gender oppression overlap multiply and deeply. "Preaching to the converted" is a weak accusation, anyhow, because it suggests that you can "get" politics, and then you have nothing else to learn. Good politics is a process that never ends, and my politics have benefited immensely reading things people write for *Make*, and from talking with people about stuff I've written.

MRR: How do you envision the linkages between your case and the fact that you were involved in the WEF protests?

CW: Well, most obviously, there probably wouldn't have been thirty cops on toilet patrol at Grand Central if the city hadn't been mobilized to crush any effective WEF protesting. I think we fell into a trap that is pretty common at large demonstrations, which is to pick off people on their way in or out of the relative safety of the masses. And I think our visibly queer crowd attracts surveillance anyhow, so our entering the militarized zone of the train station left us pretty vulnerable. And as I tried to discuss in *Piss & Vinegar*, for me this issues a challenge to organizers of anti-capitalist events—what can be done to guarantee the safe participation of all people in public spaces of dissent? Clearly, any protester going to pee at Grand Central would have encountered the extreme police presence, but a non-trans protester whose gender does not render him or her an outlaw could do so more safely.

For me, this also points to really exciting alliances that can be made with disabled people, people of color, immigrant people, homeless people, and youth—other folks who both suffer directly under capitalism and endure the hostility of urban spaces. What if our organizing started there? How could the overlap of lived experiences (which is not to suggest these experiences are identical) be a jumping off point for demanding a different, safer, more fulfilling world?

DS: I think that a lot of aspects of the arrest were a part of the WEF cop hysteria. I doubt that if the WEF protests hadn't been going on, there would have been a cop stationed outside the bathrooms at Grand Central. I think that it's important for anti-global capital protesters and organizers to think about how the police mobilization that happens when we come to a city impacts vulnerable populations locally. However, I also don't look at this arrest as a fluke based totally on the protests. While it is unusual for a white, educated tranny like me to get arrested in the bathroom in NYC, police harassment of trans youth, low-income trans people, and trans people of color is systemic in NYC. In the West Village right now, residents, many of them gay and lesbian, are organizing with public officials to get more cops into the neighborhood to "clean up" and arrest (usually with no legal basis) all the trans and queer youth and people of color who have hung out in that neighborhood for years. False arrests, harassment, and violence are commonplace for gender variant and trans low income people and people of color, and I hope that the arrests will bring people's attention to this problem as well. My arrest was unusual in some ways, because of the WEF stuff and my privilege, but the underlying police practices are not unusual. Also, harassment by non-cops in bathrooms is *extremely* common for all gender variant and trans people, and it is often accompanied by violence.

"our demand is not for more people to be comfortable in a binary gender system, it's for an end to the real and daily violence of that system."

-Craig Willse

MRR: Do you see a future in which the larger anti-globalization movement might comprehensively make these linkages?

DS: I don't know. I mean, most of the time I spend at meetings with people who do anti-globalization work generally is pretty disheartening. Most meetings I go to are run by white straight men, and even when there is supposedly an effort to include the voices of people of color and women, its pretty half-assed. I have come to feel that I'm better off spending my time organizing with people who share my views and respect me than working endlessly to fight racist, classist, and misogynist currents in groups that are fundamentally white, upper-class, and male-run. I like to envision people with privilege really taking to heart and centralizing anti-racist, anti-poverty, pro-queer and pro-trans politics in their anti-globalization work, and I know its the standard I hold myself and my cohorts to, but I don't see it happening generally that much. Mostly race, gender, and class hierarchies that are supposedly being fought by this movement are totally replicated within the larger organizations in the movement. It seems like people have an easier time seeing hierarchy and oppression outside of their own context. They want to fight against a generalized global notion of poor people being crushed, but they still give all the organizing power to the people at the meeting who own cell phones or cars, and they never think of that as an economic justice wealth distribution issue. I'm not sure what it will take to bring some of those critiques home, but I'm sort of tired of waiting and prefer to make my own spaces where its safe to be trans and organize rather than to wait for those spaces to become safe.

CW: I hope so, and I think lots of folks are working towards linking global capitalism to more localized forms of subjugation. The Colours of Resistance network (www.tao.ca/~colours) does amazing work to this end along lines of race and migrant status. They offer not only a really salient and urgent critique of white supremacy within anti-capitalist organizing, they are also creating a dynamic and productive model for anti-racist resistance to capital domination. Am I being clear about how that's different? It's not about adding a dash of color or a bit of trans to a movement that remains dedicated to a narrow agenda with which only a small handful of privileged people can identify. It's a fundamental transformation of what we recognize as a legitimate battle, it's a re-prioritizing of energy and resources so that we don't just endlessly recreate a US legacy of a "left" that leaves out most everyone.

Dean and Craig rule my school. You can get a copy of Piss & Vinegar or Make by writing: Craig Willse, PO Box 321855, New York, NY 10032

It's a buck or two, or a trade. Also check out www.makezine.org, *with regular updates, essays, and news about radical queer politics.*

SCHIZOPHRENIC RECORDS

interview by stephe perry

Craig Caron has been a staple in the Hamilton punk scene for as long as I can remember. Often coming to Toronto shows, I remember picking up a RABID DEFIANCE demo from him. He did a show for a band I was in at the legendary Corktown. After talking to him, I remember him working on the SONS OF ISHMAEL/RAPED TEENAGERS split and talking to him about his work at a psychiatric institution. In the last few years, his label has started to get off the ground, first with his comps, then with his commitment to the BCT reissues, and now more formally with full-fledged releases. We pulled together details about the label over a few emails.

MRR: How long have you been doing a label for?

The label began in about 1985 when I first started to distribute tapes and records. I started out selling *BCT* tapes, demos, and the odd record. From there, I made a few tapes. The first tape was an all Canadian Punk/hardcore tape called *Northern Assault*. Then I had a few demo tapes from my band RABID DEFIANCE and an international hardcore compilation tape called *Communicate Not Exterminate*. The Label per se began in the mid-90s when I co-released a few releases like the NEOS *Fight With Donald* 7" and the NEOS CD discography.

MRR: Where did you get the name Schizophrenic from?

While I was still in high school I always had this dream of putting out a record. The actual label name came to me in sociology class when we were having a heated debate about psychiatric survivors and pharmaceuticals. Anyhow, the first Schizophrenic record was going to be a split 7" with the SONS OF ISHMAEL and RAPED TEENAGERS. At the time, I was in high school working odd jobs and any money I had went towards the typical things like records, shows, and beer. To pay for the record, I worked at a minimum wage job at the psychiatric hospital. It was the greatest summer job a kid could ask for, however I never did save the money I needed and the record never happened. This release will one day happen, as the tapes are still kicking around.

MRR: How did the idea to start a label come up?

At the time, I was in a band seeing tons of bands and just wanted to do as much as I could. I was just a kid with lots of dreams. I was also lucky because I was friends with Imants (Note: Imants has been in the scene forever being around in the first wave of punk. Imants was a radio DJ at CFMJ in Hamilton and has the largest collection of punk records in Canada) and started to correspond with Chris from BCT and other like-minded folks who showed us kids that we could do whatever we wanted, on our terms. With photocopies, the postal system, and tape decks there was a world of punk rock to be discovered and to be shared. It has all snowballed from there.

MRR: You are co-releasing the legendary BCT Tapes. Can you explain the arrangement with this and how it came about?

I began to write Chris in 1984 when I purchased my first BCT tape. Chris and I continued to write each other. As well we started to trade records, tapes and then I started to sell BCT tapes. The *Northern Assault* tape was originally going to be a BCT release; however Chris wanted a couple of the slower punk songs removed. By the time the tape was released BCT had stopped producing new tapes. There were a couple of other tapes that my buddy Imants and I edited and created that never saw the light of day as BCT releases. In particular, there was an all-Yugoslavian tape we put together and a tape by the British band called THE FIEND. Although BCT wasn't releasing new tapes, Chris and I maintained contact. Chris and I lost contact for a few years in the late 90s, and then we reconnected on-line. I asked him about releasing the CDs and offered to sort through the original tapes to recreate the tapes as CDs. Here we are

today with five CDs out and more to come. The CD project has been helped out by some new buds, Mike from Human Stench label and William and the guys at Enterruption label.

MRR: What is *Hardcore Amerika*?

Hardcore Amerika is another BCT release. It combines the best tracks from two other BCT comps, *Eat Me*, which was the third comp, and *I'm Buck Naked*, which was the tenth comp. The CD was edited and mastered by myself and is the first BCT release of the Enterruption folks, who are my partners in crime in re-releasing the remaining BCT tapes. The CD features bands like WHITE FLAG, DETENTION, DISORDERLY CONDUCT, LOVE CANAL, and PSYCHO. There are 57 songs in total.

MRR: What are the next BCT comps that you plan on releasing?

First Strike is the next release. It is the first BCT tape and has material by the CLITBOYS, VIOLATION, EAT THE RICH, and VATICAN COMMANDOS.

MRR: You started out by putting out some NEOS releases. Why the NEOS and how did this idea come about?

The NEOS were one of the first bands that really turned my head as a kid. I found their single at a local shop and it just ripped my head off. They took hardcore the next step by playing as fast as they could. Another real important piece for me was their age. They were young kids playing as fast as they could. Back then I was a little kid making noise in the basement and to see kids just a bit older than us was great. The bands that we were into like BAD BRAINS, MDC, BIG BOYS, DK's they all seemed so much older. The NEOS *Fight with Donald* 7" and then the CD discography came about as a result of a friendship and a mutual love for the band. Jason, who was instrumental in the planning and coordinating of these releases, is planning a NEOS LP discography plus bonuses. This LP will rule once it sees the light of day.

MRR: Did your involvement with the NEOS lead you to releasing the MEXICAN POWER AUTHORITY material?

Yes, Kev from the NEOS played in MPA. Again I think MPA is one of the most underrated bands around. They played some amazing, innovative music. Much like the NEOS, they pushed the boundaries of hardcore. The CD is a disc I totally love; however it remains unknown because a lot of the larger hardcore mags have refused to review it claiming the CD isn't punk. What the fuck? Where did all these boundaries and borders come from? When I first got into punk it was everything from MR. EPP to I REFUSE IT to LEATHER NUN.

MRR: How did you come to put out the LEGION666 release?

Well, I have always loved LEGION. They are solid band, good guys that never get the recognition they deserve. Anyway, they had a great CD recorded and were having differences with the label that had originally planned to release it. Trying to keep the scene politics aside, I approached the band to release the disc. By the time I became involved in the project the CD had a new cover; however the original cover art is included with the CD.

MRR: How did the split with a band from Brazil like SICK TERROR come about (referring to the LEGION split)? Did you know them or did LEGION know them? I thought initially Ugly Pop was doing a release with SICK TERROR. Did this come as a result of the band working with Ugly Pop?

Shortly after the LEGION CD came out, Paul was visiting and we were talking about future plans for LEGION. I mentioned to Paul that I had recently been in contact with SICK TERROR and was planning a split project with them. Without any hesitation LEGION committed to it. The split LP came as a result of SICK TERROR contacting me and had nothing to do with Ugly Pop. Actually Simon and I did have a few emails about this, more in the sense of "What is happening with this release?" "What is on it?" and at this point I am not sure if it ever materialized. I do know a CD version of the Fight label 7" has been released and Ugly Pop was credited for doing a vinyl version of the 7"; however, I thought the UP project was going to be exclusive tracks.

MRR: What has been your favorite release on your label and why?

That's a difficult question to answer. As far as my own releases that I play for myself or others it has to be either the LEGION CD or the *Spanking Nurse* comp. The comp is one of my favorites to date. The LEGION/SICK TERROR split is up there, as well. It is the record I love to look at. Darrin did a great job on the cover and both sides

Defiance Music Bastard System:

four words that summarize my concept of my label and what punk and hardcore means to me...

of the vinyl destroy you.

MRR: What is your rationale for releasing material? What makes you decide to put a record out? What does it have to have?

Well I have to really like the band; but more importantly I have to be able to connect with the band on a personal level. To me that connection is more important than the combination of music and presentation. I don't think there is a Schizophrenic sound, so you won't win me over with a particular sound, just be approachable, sound people. This is very ironic as today the planned ASBESTOS 7" was scrapped. This is a perfect example of a good record by a band I wasn't able to connect with. After I promised them the record and made the band a top priority, I found out the record was already released, and the band was very secretive about their plans, and about a canceled US tour. When the band was pushed for information, the band packed the deal in. I still like the band, but I am glad that the record did not happen. I have to be able to stand behind the band and their records, and it just wasn't happening.

MRR: What releases are you working on?

Upcoming projects include a project with the CRUNKY KIDS, a SLANG release, a THEY LIVE discography, the *T.O.H.C.* comp, more *BCT* comps, and a split release with 9 SHOCKS TERROR and SICK TERROR. There are so many things in the planning stages at this time.

MRR: Are you working on a revised version of the T.O. hardcore comp?

Yes, I am trying to get a regional comp. out that will focus on the Toronto scene. The comp was originally a project Simon from Ugly Pop had initiated. The project has been expanded to an LP/CD, but it is going slow. Bands had been approached a while ago, but I had only received a couple CDRs and art to date. I have approached bands again. It will happen in punk time. If all goes well the CD will include a CD ROM that combines punk rock and demolition derbies.

MRR: Who will be on the comp and how has it developed from the initial Ugly Pop release?

Some of the bands that have been approached include SCARE TACTIC, HAYMAKER, CAREER SUICIDE, FUCKED UP, MURDER SQUAD, RIOT 99, CLASS ASSASSINS, and the TIJUANA BIBLES. The project has grown from a 7" to an LP or CD. I want bands to have a the opportunity to show their wares. So they will have a chance for a few songs and if I am lucky, a Demolition Derby CD ROM.

MRR: It seems like there is something between Ugly Pop and Schizophrenic. Are these shared or passed-off projects coincidental, or are you purposely working with the same bands?

As far as any connections, they are mainly coincidental. Simon and I share the odd email back and forth on projects, but that is really the end of the conspiracy. The LEGION CD came out after the band and the label had some differences, and I stepped up to bat. The *T.O.H.C.* comp came to life because I wanted to do a regional comp and Simon had told me that he had started a 7" that has never come to life. At this point, I am not sure if any of the bands on the original project will be on the CD/LP. So I think any connections are likely because we both hang out at the same shows, sell our distros at the same shows, and are in contact with many of the same folks around the world.

MRR: How did this 9 SHOCKS split come about? It has a "Terror" theme?

SICK TERROR really liked the split LP and are recording new songs. SICK TERROR wanted to do another split record and asked if I knew anybody in 9 SHOCKS. I spoke with Tony the other day and he is into doing a project of some kind. So there are few details at this point. I am thrilled about it as I have been leaving Schiz 13 open for a 9 SHOCKS release. At this point the "terrors" theme has not worked out.

MRR: "Defiance Music Bastard System" appears on a few of your releases. Why do you keep using it? Where does it come from? What is the significance of the phrase?

Defiance Music Bastard System: four words that summarize my concept of my label and what punk and hardcore means to me. Punk is more than music-it's about social justice, getting your hands dirty in the garden, living your life by your standards and values.

MRR: How can people get in touch with the label?

The label and the distribution have recently moved into the 90s. We have a web page at www.schizophrenicrex.com. I can be contacted by email at jimjones@schizophrenicrex.com. For those preferring paper and pen I can be contacted at 17 West 4th, Hamilton, ON, L9C 3M2, Canada.

TOYS THAT KILL

Interview by Bobby Manic

MRR: Why don't we start off with who is in the band and who plays what.

Todd: That's Chachi—he plays bass when he's in the band but guards in basketball. He's a great passer, terrific passer. Fleps, he's the drummer, he's not here right now. Sean is second guitar and I'm Todd and I'm second guitar too maybe, or maybe he's first guitar, I don't know.

MRR: Why don't you give me some background about the band, you and Sean were in FYP, then what happened?

Todd: We were FYP then I got totally sick of playing the same thing. We wanted to do something really new and fresh. We wanted to go on tour without any... they put ex-FYP on the flyers, that's fine, but we wanted to go on tour and play songs and not have the FYP stigma behind us. This is pretty much the first time I like being in a band. I never really liked being in a band with FYP, I just liked getting up on stage and puking and shit.

MRR: I'm sure people still yell out FYP requests—how does that make you feel, knowing that something you've done for so long is still on the lips and minds of people, even after the project has been over for more than a year now?

Todd: I don't know, I have mixed feelings. I don't really like it but sometimes I do. I like the fact that this happened, I used to be really ashamed of it but now when I look back, I really like FYP, but I don't want to play the songs right now. I'm not going to say I never will again because I might wake up one day and go, I wanna play this song and play it somewhere, but I just don't feel like playing it right now.

MRR: A lot of people are griping that this isn't FYP—it's too poppy. What's your response to that?

Todd: I think the last three FYP records are way poppier than this band. A lot of people like to say anything off the top of their lips, and that's fine, it's their opinion but a lot of people will read certain things and they go on that instead of just judging the music for themselves. But that's the way it goes, I can't stop it. They can dig up FYP records whenever they want and listen to it and slam around the room but we're over it. We went on tour for 10 years with FYP and the people that complain the most weren't there. So, it was something that at the time we liked to do and we just wanted to annoy people. It's not the same thing now.

MRR: A friend of mine came with me to see you guys last time you played here at Gilman and he heard "Amphetamine Street" and said, "this is the new 'Buried'."

Todd: I actually like "Buried," that's one of the FYP songs that I like. There's probably about five that I like and that's one of them.

MRR: I noticed your lyrics have a lot more thought to them. They seem a lot more planned out. You guys seem to take your time with Toys that Kill, where FYP was more a 45 second burst of venom.

Todd: Yeah, you know what's weird, is that the record we recorded as Toys That Kill, we spent 10% of what we did on the last two FYP records and we did it probably 1/3 faster than all the FYP records. But as far as songwriting, we definitely practiced a lot, we played a lot of shows, we toured before we had a record, so we were actually a band. With FYP it was like, "Hey, I've got this song, let's learn it then we'll play it. Once we know how to play it, we'll go in the studio." That's fun to do but I'm not really into that anymore.

MRR: A lot of lyrics have a lot of resentment towards father figures, is that directed towards your guys' fathers or authority in general?
Todd: Probably, more like authority in general. Shawn is a totally different story, he'll probably have to go into that and... I love my dad. I don't have any complaints about my dad. When I was a kid, he wanted me to play sports but I didn't really go for that—I just wanted to skate and listen to punk rock music and then he got used to it and he supported whatever I wanted to do. So, nothing is directed toward my dad, but that's just me speaking.
MRR: We'd have the rest of the band speaking, but . . .
Todd: Well, Shawn's dad actually comes to our shows and my dad doesn't come to our shows, so there's a weird twist but I can't really go into it without him. And I don't think he wants to go into it, to tell you the truth.
MRR: The album was great, I had a lot of fun seeing you guys play here over the summer, but it seemed like you guys kind of just went away. I may have been hiding in a cave but I expected you guys to be in a lot of interviews in a lot of magazines. lot more singles, you guys seemed kind of quiet after the record.
Todd: Toys that Kill or FYP?
MRR: Toys that Kill.
Todd: We've been playing a lot, but it's just hard to get out on tour all the time. We'd definitely tour a lot but right now the drummer that we have can't go on tour with us so we're trying to find a drummer. Once that happens, we're definitely going to be playing a lot, but were not really into the whole machine of trying to get all this press and being like the next White Stripes or something like that, we just wanna play. I mean, I like the White Stripes, I'm totally dissin' but uh—It's like, the press that we've gotten so far has been great, it's surpassed anything I've ever thought of a band. We've gotten great reviews but it's not something that we want to do we just wanna play. We want to keep recording and doing shit. We don't want to get stuck in that whole machine of having to do a record a year and having to show up for an interview for this magazine and saying you're the next big thing, it's like, fuck that.
MRR: This band is definitely at your own pace.
Todd: Yeah, I wanna play all the time but with the band members that we have, we just have to compromise more, because Shawn is working more, and you get to the point where you have to work and you have to compromise a little bit more, but it's worth it in the long run. It frustrates me—I want to start something where I can just go play whenever I want, but with a band like this you just have to compromise with everybody.
MRR: You guys just put out a split 45 with the Raging Hormones on Stardumb Records. Why don't you tell me how you got hooked up with Stardumb and how this came about?
Todd: I don't know for sure how it happened, I think Stardumb just asked us. I think Kevin from the Apers, he was the first one that asked but it could have been Stephen that instigated it, I don't know. They just asked us to do a split with this band, we didn't know them or anything, we said sure, we were getting ready to go record our album so we'll just record extra songs for you guys. It was great, I liked working with those guys.
MRR: Really nice people.
Todd: Yeah, we didn't really work together, but it was just like, we'll send you a tape and the way it came out, those guys were really nice and I would definitely want to do more records in the future with them.
MRR: Both songs on it are really great, but I have to ask, where do you find all those strange sound clips between songs?
Todd: It depends which one, they come from everywhere. Like one of them on the album is from the *Twilight Zone;* "Obsolete Man" was the episode. I'm a big *Twilight Zone* fan. The actual one on the split where it starts and stops it was this little rocking horse thing that I bought for my niece. I bought it for her because when you press the ear, it makes that sound, and I'm like well, I'm going to buy this for her for Christmas but I'm going to tape it first just for the recording, so it was one of those selfish kill two birds with one stone type of thing. I played it for her, she was like two years old at the time. She freaked out and started screaming, so I was like, I definitely gotta put this on a record, if it makes kids react like that then it's all good.
MRR: Did you guys have fun tonight, playing the party?
Todd: Yeah, hell yeah. It was one of our funniest shows in the last two months.
MRR: How's Recess doing?
Todd: Getting out of debt. Once, that happens, it's all over. I just want to get out of debt.
MRR: Recess has always been one of my favorite labels, you never pigeonholed yourselves, you put a lot of great records out by a lot of diverse bands.
Todd: Yeah, that was the thing I was talking about before, there's a difference between Berzerk and the Beatnik Termites, and I like them both equally the same. It's a bad move nowadays, because like, TKO Records, they put out a strict certain amount of records and that's it. I like a lot of different kinds of music and I can't really stick to a band that has to sound like the Grumpies or FYP every time, that is just totally boring to me, and I don't care if that totally gets people distracted by the label because I think it definitely does because they can't stick to one certain type of music, that's sad though. Hey, wanna get in on this?

(Sean and Chachi arrive on the scene)
Chachi: I guess. Making shots like crazy over there.
MRR: How's it goin'?
Chachi: All right.
Todd: How was the game?
Chachi: It was good, I was doing good.
Todd: I'm interviewing Chachi.
MRR: Did you win?
Chachi: I don't think we were keeping score.
MRR: You have to keep score! Sean, how do you like being a frontman for a change, rather than just being the bass player or the drummer?
Sean: Well, I'll tell you what, man, ever since I was a little kid, I always wanted to be an actual singer in a heavy metal band so, I never figured I'd have to go through the whole ranks from being a roadie to merch guy to drummer to bass player. It's kind of like a ranking, you know, like drummer is at the bottom of the barrel and the hardest working. But, it's about time that I'm singing.
MRR: How did you meet?
Todd: You tell him that.
Chachi: How I met you guys?
Todd: Yeah.
Chachi: Well, I met them from going to FYP shows, and then one day they actually moved to my hometown, and then Todd opened up a record store and since then they've been trying to get rid of 'em, and I don't know how you guys met.
Todd: We met through, ah...you tell him.
Sean: How we met? Well...
MRR: Dating service?
Sean: I wish, I don't think those work, but when I was about 22 or 23, I got kicked out of my parents' house, I was living on the couch at one of my friend's houses and I wasn't really into the situation and I got a call from some friends that live in LA and they offered me a spot on the couch over there for 100 bucks a month, I ended up finding a job over there and then the people that I met over there were mutual friends with Todd and they needed a drummer for tour because their old drummer, Carlos, wasn't into touring so they always had to find a new drummer and so I offered to do a two week tour.
Todd: The rest is history.
MRR: I remember a friend's younger brother was hanging out with us and we took him to go see Toys that Kill and he kept pointing at you and saying, I have him on one of my skate videos. So we went home, we cracked open a beer and sure enough you were there.
Todd: You guys were sharing a beer?
MRR: Yes, the three of us, we were poor. So, you actually were a professional skater at one time?
Todd: Yeah.
MRR: What made you stop skating?
Todd: My ramp got torn down

Sean: I was an amateur skater for a time, no one ever asked me that.

MRR: Do you guys still skate?

Sean: Yeah, definitely not as much but usually I'll go skate, smack into a few walls and wake up sore head to toe and then give it a break.

Todd: To quote Charles Bronson, "At least I still fucking skate!" you know.

Sean: That's not the band, that's actually Charles Bronson.

MRR: It was Death Wish Nine. Punk rock and skating used to be synonymous in California, especially Southern California, during the early and mid 80s—now it's very different, it's more of a hip-hop thing. Do you think punk rock and skating are still linked?

Todd: To some people, it's one of those things where it's not in the media, it's not on that show *Skate,* the Saturday morning cartoon show or whatever it is.

Chachi: It's just the background you come from.

Sean: Don't you think skateboarding and it's popularity coincide with music? Like skateboarding became a milk commercial, the music just kind of followed to it. It all kind of coincided with the popularity of hip-hop and skaters, I think back when Todd and I were growing up, skateboarders, you walk down the hall and they call you a dirt bag, they call you a fag.

Todd: It was definitely like the heavy metalers, the heshers, were the fucking BMXers and the skaters were the punks. There was something behind it. That was great to me but the thing is I would always skate with this guy Mike Tomacota, on his ramp, he was a total hesh and it was a bike ramp. At the time it was the only ramp to skate on so we had to listen to Metallica the whole time. He came over to my ramp and he said the same thing, he's like, "a skate ramp!?" and he had to listen to 7 Seconds and Black Flag the whole time and it was just one of those things where we just had to say "all right that's cool bro," like Mike Tomacota was such a stoner and a hesher that he dealt with it and I was cool with it too.

Sean: Don't you think skaters were tired of not getting chicks and stuff so a lot of hip-hop is geared toward around how you get your clothes and you're all stylish and stuff and you're talking about chicks and cars and stuff like that so they kinda amalgamated with skateboarding with hip-hop. Next thing you know you're skating and you get all the chicks and you're popular.

MRR: What do you guys think of when you hear the term "skate punk"—do you think of bands like Pennywise and the Fat bands or bands like JFA?

Todd: I just think of the Faction, that's it. That's the only band I think of.

Sean: Depends on what era, like if you said what do you think of skate punk now...

Todd: Drunk Engines.

Sean: I would probably say the Epi-Fat stuff, but when I think about skate rock, I think of the *Thrasher* compilations.

Todd: I think skate punk is a terrible, terrible thing to be labeled as, I mean FYP was labeled that the whole time, I just can't swallow it, there was something about it that was just, blaaaa (barfing sound). It was like, let's skate and play and skate and play, I mean it's great if that's your life, it's cool but just to be labeled that, it's just terrible.

MRR: A lot of your lyrics seemed to have a strong resentment towards father figures, he said it wasn't directly toward his dad more toward authority, how about you?

Sean: Um...I don't think it's an attack on father figures per se. A lot of the lyrics are just a combination of things, yeah father figures, probably. I tried to get out of that one. I love my dad and stuff but uh...yeah maybe there is a little something.

Todd: "But uh," says it all.

Sean: I had a lot of dads growing up so maybe that had something to do with it. I had more than two.

Todd: That should be the new emo, a lot-of-dads type music.

Sean: So I guess that's kinda emo.

MRR: That's pretty emo, you guys are getting pretty deep here.

Todd: A lot-of-dads-core, spread it.

Sean: I was kinda wondering about this. There's been varied response through the course of touring and playing shows—you run into people and you're like, that's a good band and stuff like that, mostly like promoters and other bands, so I've been kind of getting it in my head that we're more of like a band's band. I was wondering if you had some kind of connection to the kids. Like I always wonder, are random kids hearing the record? Do they like the record? It seems like there's a million kids in here but it seems like they're hearing the record for the first time.

MRR: I think the audience tonight seemed a lot younger than most people that listen to you guys. I think a lot of these kids were at Gilman St. for the first time or maybe just picked up *Maximum RocknRoll* in the last few months and decided that they would show up to the anniversary show. But they seemed to react pretty well to you guys, they had a lot of fun dancing and singing along, so that must be something, right?

Sean: Well FYP seemed like the bands would be like, "oh great." Promoters would be like, "don't break my mics," but the kids were totally fucking into it. I don't know what's better or worse.

Todd: I'd rather be somebody that's playing the music. I'd rather be on their top 10 list than some kid's that just wants to hear something really fast.

MRR: Personally, after seeing you guys for quite a while, I actually prefer seeing Toys that Kill just because I get 30 minutes of great songs rather than...

Todd: Puke and mohawks. That was two Guttermouth 7"s.

MRR: You guys seem really happy with the direction the band is going.

Sean: I think our intention was always to write good songs and have fun playing and stuff like that, but with FYP it just got contrived sort of and towards the end of FYP the songs started getting better, we started getting more into playing music. Once we changed over we were like, OK, let's write some songs and let's make sure our equipment doesn't fall apart and make sure we take it more seriously and make something that someone can be proud of.

Todd: But it's still at a level that you wanna rock the fuck out.

Sean: We get to rock out.

Todd: That's something that is never going to stop.

Sean: Yeah, we're not just going to stare at our fret boards.

Todd: If you want to go in that direction, that's fine.

Sean: There's still a sense of humor to it, we don't take ourselves seriously in the sense of like where there's no humor.

MRR: But it's still a lot of fun even though you take it seriously.

Todd: To me personally, it's like one hundred thousand times more fun.

Sean: It's fun to rock and not have expectations to play speed-punk stuff. There was something cool about a rock tempo and being able to progress to that level and not have to worry about having these standards that you're expected to view or whatever.

Todd: One time we played in Portland, there was this one guy that the whole night he was like, "Yeah! I love you guys!!" But he was talking about FYP

MRR: He didn't quite realize it was a different band.

Todd: And that's fine, but we're not doing that shit. Halfway through the set he's just disgusted with what we were doing.

Sean: People fall in love with ideas, like they get a record in their room and then that's their whole idea, it's their whole world. They don't realize that there's other people's lives totally going on. They are just like, "I love this song and I love this record," and that's their whole concept of what you're doing and they can't go to a show, watch a band, or hear another record and absorb that or like stand back and give it appreciation.

Todd: I definitely have what I like to call the 7 Seconds background which was I searched around for their first 7", *Skins Brains and Guts,* and it just sounds totally muddy. All you hear is guitar you can't hear the drums and it's just one of the best 7"s in the world, especially when I was a teenager.

Sean: U2 era

Todd: It was right after *Walk Together, Rock Together,* and they were going into the total poppy thing. The first time I saw Green Day, I thought, oh, they sound like 7 Seconds. Pretty much like that. And I didn't care when I first saw them, I was just so jazzed on seeing 7 Seconds that I didn't expect them to play "Skins, Brains and Guts" over and over again and I saw them probably 15 times after that and I was never disappointed just because they were going in a direction that was completely unknown and I liked it, but I definitely thought that the early stuff was the shit that I totally couldn't live without, but I never, ever thought, you fucking fags, fuck that. You know, we got letters that we were complete faggots.

Sean: We were in a hot tub with Green Day in one letter.

Todd: Yeah, that was great. That was after we moved to San Francisco. It was crazy. To get a reaction out of someone like that, it's great.

Sean: People get like so hardcore. They take something that you created and then recreate it and then it's theirs, it's not yours anymore and then they hold it against you when you do something human like progress onto something else. Now, granted we all criticize and everyone had their own standards of what they're going to do and what they like. There's definitely bands that progress into something totally shitty. Maybe to some of these kids, we did.

Todd: That's fine, we like it. That's the point about it. Our next record could sound totally different. I mean, I don't think it's going to be different from the last record but you never know.

Sean: Well the bottom line is like we'll play and make songs, anything we like, we'll incorporate it to our ability. There's no formula other than certain ska-punk. So, there's no real formula to it. We don't really have some strategies like, we're gonna take over the kids with some new genre or something. We incorporate all of our influences and throw them out there and see what happens.

MRR: So what's next for you guys?

Todd: We're touring in August with Dilinger Four, after that I don't know, hopefully cut a new record. We got songs building up, like a mother fucker.

Sean: Like an espresso machine. The steam in an espresso machine.

Todd: I talked to him, he's totally excited about his songs, I'm totally excited about my songs. It's totally exciting man, that's it.

MRR: I'm excited to hear them.

Todd: Yeah, it's one of those things where it's like everything we do is always going to change.

Contact: PO Box 1666, San Leandro, CA 90733

No band has been turning heads on the east coast quite like Give Us Barabbas. Their debut album, *Luke 23:18*, is now out on Ever Reviled Records and brings home the utter blasphemy and Christian criticism of this powerhouse rock band. Their live show is controversial, theatrical, and satirical all in one. Their music is hard, emotional, and shredding all in one. Whether you are disgusted, offended, or perhaps even enlightened by them, you can't help but watch. This interview was conducted on email, and the band gave consensus answers.

GIVE US BARABBAS

INTERVIEW BY DEICIDE

MRR: Hey Give Us Barabbas! Let's cut straight to the chase here...your lyrics are sometimes a point of controversy. Here is your chance to clear some records with people. What is the overriding message behind Give Us Barabbas?
Give Us Barabbas: The collective vision of (the vigilante soul-rockers, revolutionaries, lovers, fighters, and Star Trek junkies herein referred to as) Give us Barabbas is to passionately oppose and vehemently defy the boredom and alienation forced upon us by the current mode of production. Through our words, music, and performances, we seek to create for ourselves an outlet for expression that conveys our deepest thoughts and beliefs, while also offering us an alternative to the alienating ideals of the capitalist socioeconomic system that forces the artist within every person to be a slave to production rather than creation. We firmly believe that all human beings must find their own way of expressing their true creative energy, and we have found ours. Our expression is pure passion, and has come from every crevice of our collective being. We not only revel in it's stupidity, we absolutely adore it, because it is ours and it is pure, and we don't give a fuck what anyone else thinks of it. Give us Barabbas by no means intends to please everyone, and does not feign to offer the answers to anything. On the contrary, we simply seek to offer our own vision and our own alternative to this world, in a manner that expresses and captures our personalities, passion for life, and desire for social revolution.

MRR: Were your songs written to purposely offend people's religious sensibilities?
Give Us Barabbas: The controversial lyrics on *Luke 23:18* deal with topics like homophobia, mental slavery, and alienation (all byproducts of the capitalist economic system) in a manner that many may feel is offensive. The song "Jesus Christ Stole My Virginity" (the second scene in musical-opera *Luke 23:18*) has been our most controversial song to date. The intent of this song is to force our listener to analyze our politics by offending his/her, as you said, "religious sensibilities." Because making a statement like "Jesus Christ Stole My Virginity" can leave a lasting impression on someone who has been taught all their lives to be obedient to a God, we are assured that our listener will be forced to analyze our message (because once they become offended they also remember what offended them, which forces them to think about why it offended them).

MRR: What do you say to the person who agrees with the band's point of view, but is personally offended by the lyrics to your songs?
Give Us Barabbas: That's a tough question, Deicide, because we are only humans, and our goal is not to make enemies. We strongly encourage dialogue between Give Us Barabbas and all of our listeners and viewers. Building a directly democratic and collective world is going to take a sense of community and dialogue that needs to start being built now! This includes even the most ghettoized and esoteric places like the hardcore community. Approaching an artist and having a conversation is a great way to open the lines of communication and share ideas, beliefs, opinions, and eventually build a more communal world! Give Us Barabbas is all about building a more solid counter-culture founded on open communication. Give Us Barabbas is also aware that many times certain individuals may be offended and unwilling to open dialogue with us. It is in this case that we employ the ever-so-gentle "fuck right off principle." We are not willing to discuss our message with people who seek to prove their masculinity by threatening us physically or calling us "faggots." We have had many encounters with people within the hardcore community who have been totally belligerent and basically tried to pick fights with us. Although we find this type of attitude completely appalling, it does make us feel like we are doing our job really well. Making a closet-case homophobe turn to violence gives us a sense of pride in our work.

MRR: *Luke 23:18*, your debut CD, is actually a story that you explain in a booklet that you have available on request. Who came up with the story, and what was the inspiration?
Give Us Barabbas: The underlying plot of *Luke 23:18* is not a story—the events interpreted within it actually occurred, we merely retold them in the form of a story. The inspiration for *Luke 23:18* came when our former lead singer, Michael J. Turi, told us his darkest, most well-kept secret: on the night of April 15, 2000 Jesus Christ descended from heaven and "stole his virginity." After months of disbelief, utter confusion, and the tragic death of Michael J. Turi, the collective group of friends that came to be known as Give us Barabbas decided to take our story to the public with the hopes that it would alarm the masses about the growing danger of religious indoctrination. Michael J. Turi was a man who believed in his faith and in the end his faith came back and fucked him right up the ass. As you can see, it was fairly easy to come up with a story when the plot had already taken place. The actual translation of the real life events into the story we now affectionately refer to as *Luke 23:18* took place for about two years, ending with the release of *Luke 23:18*. The idea for the production of *Luke 23:18* as a concept album or "rock-opera," if you will, is not an original idea. It is clearly lifted from our predecessors, The Who, who invented the genre of "rock-opera." We merely applied it to a more contemporary style of music, hardcore. With our updated and notoriously more offensive version of "the rock-opera," we intend to send cacophonous shrieks down Christian America's collective spine. Yes, "Jesus Christ Stole Our Virginity," and he might have stolen yours as well. We suggest you listen to the record to find out.

MRR: The story performed at your live show is one of the main attractions of Give Us Barabbas. Jordan, your Jesus toga sometimes seems loosely fitting. Have you ever had it come off in mid set?
Give Us Barabbas: Yes, Jesus' toga has fallen off during the middle of our set. Every time it happens my ass gets all swollen and teary just thinking about having Jesus Christ's long hard Christian sword penetrating me, again. Oh yeah and it offends all the closet case homophobes in the room, and that's always fun now isn't it?

MRR: What's the deal with guitar players in Give Us Barabbas?
Give Us Barabbas: Give us Barabbas has an elite team of guitarists ready on call to meet our every demand. Vincent retains the right to bring out the slave whips in case of any accidental notes and/or missed chord-slides. You heard it hear first.

MRR: Tell us Give Us Barabbas' most interesting encounter with Christian fundamentalism.
Give Us Barabbas: Deicide, it would be impossible to give you just one of our favorite encounters with Christian fundamentalism. Instead, we have compiled a list of our favorite encounters:

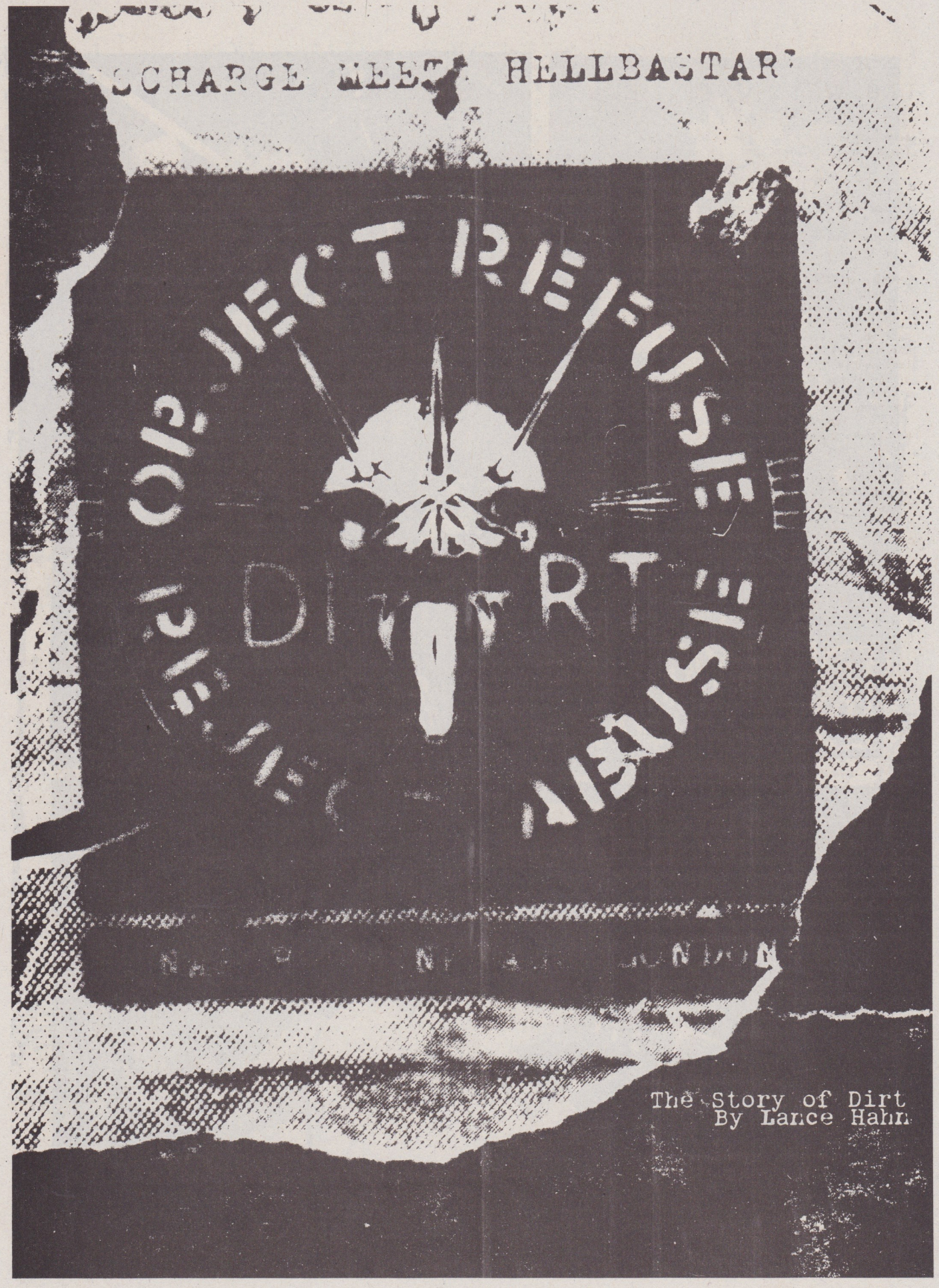
- Vincent being singled out amongst thousands of people at a theme park when he was younger by a "youth group leader" and asked if he knew where he was going after death. Vincent obviously responded with the proverbial atheist answer, "absolutely nowhere." Which infuriated the group leader, invoking a two hour long debate about why that guy really needs to get laid and leave Jesus out of all major theme parks.
- Being kicked out of our practice space after Mike Curry's father (a staunch Catholic fundamentalist) discovered and read the lyrics to "Jesus Christ Stole My Virginity."
- After debating with a nun (3/5 of Give us Barabbas attended Sunday School together) over why "God looks down on homosexuals" asking her if "God cared about fucking a sheep or a goat." You can't buy entertainment better than that.
- Mclean's friend running out of the room crying after her first Give us Barabbas show and later exclaiming, "I lost all respect for you, Mike McLean."
- A few months ago this girl had to buy a second copy of *Luke 23:18* because her Mom discovered the first copy and preceded to break it in half.
- And by far the worst encounter any of us have had with Christian fundamentalism—actually getting fucked by Jesus Christ. Don't believe it happened? We have the videotape to prove it.

MRR: Tell us a little about future touring plans and future CD release plans, if any.
Give Us Barabbas: Give us Barabbas will begin touring on December 26 and will stop when one of us drops dead. We are currently creating our new LP (which will be another rock-opera), which is due out when we fucking finish it. We refuse to be slaves to time deadlines and any other factors that suggest that we should produce just for the sake of producing. The record will be finished when we feel it is ready. Until the new LP is finished we will continue to tour the world and the spread the word of Barabbas.
Subvert//Create//Resist—Give us Barabbas

PHOTOS BY SUSAN SEGER

BEWARE

IN CONTROL


CHARGE MEET HELLBASTARD
OBJECT REFUSIER
DIRT
The Story of Dirt
By Lance Hahn

"Naïve? No way... I think the whole thing was enthusiastic and took up the momentum of a runaway train." -Gary, guitar and vocals

Three vocalists, six guitar players, five drummers and five bassists and the history of DIRT could read like a Pete Frame family tree. Spanning the 80s and into the 90s, the band splintered and reconstituted on an arbitrary and perplexing schedule.

Though some versions of the story have the band forming in February 1981 at a mental institution, Death Is Reality Today formed in 1980 with two young people riding the same bus.

Gary, "The band was actually formed in 1980... memory of that time is a bit jaded (21 years ago). And like everything else you tend to remember extremes... be they good or bad.

"I was writing lyrics/music and going to lots of gigs (shows) at the time. I was looking for other people to play with and ended up teaching a friend how to play guitar... (could just about play myself).

"Deno was a friend who lived local and we used to go home on the same bus! We never met at the Institute for Mental Health... We did however develop a history of problems that would lead people to believe that was the case... (This was perhaps one of the strong points of the band... our two personalities were so extreme that people who worked with us ended up suffering on numerous occasions).

"You may notice we had something like 21 different members throughout the band's history!"

Having been fascinated and moved by the initial punk explosion of '77 in England, founding members Gary and Deno found the movement as part of what defined his rites of passage. Though he had never been in a band before, forming DIRT was almost something of inevitability.

Gary, "Punk rock exploded in London in 1977. At that point... I was going through the 'growing up phase', not knowing what I was gonna do with my life.

"The UK at that time was in a fucking mess. High unemployment. Strikes. Power cuts. There really did seem to be 'no future'....

"Music up to this point was crappy rock bands... same old shit... elevator music.

"Punk was loud, fresh, in your face and exciting... It acknowledged its surroundings and said 'Fuck You.' Prior to punk I felt alienated, had few friends and no idea about what to do in life... Punk gave me confidence and a direction. It certainly opened my eyes to the politics around me and made me think about things. It also gave me something more-a sense of belonging-a "scene" that I wanted to be part of and a vehicle as an outlet for 'my ideas.'"

When punk began evolving musically into uncharted areas as demonstrated on the more abrasive side by Crass and Discharge at the time, the two were ensconced in the high energy music where the live show was everything and the record was the souvenir.

Gary, "I can't remember what I listened to at the time. I know my tastes haven't changed that much and my record collection reflects that whole period. I used to see live bands all the time, regardless of what they sounded like. I just loved the whole energy that was around at the time. Can't say that anything really influenced me-you can probably judge that by the way I play!"

Having been made aware of the growing anarchist punk scene around Crass in London, the libertarian ideas found easy manifestation in the anti-authoritarian, anti-mainstream ideas Gary and Deno had already found to be endemic to punk.

Gary, "I think the so-called anarcho politics stemmed from the sense of community that developed after the 'No Future' ideas... The bands at the time were being bought up by the record industry and marketed as 'Anarchic.'

"There was no way I was gonna let this be taken away from me... So just continued with the idea that we didn't need the mainstream... and if the punk movement was gonna become mainstream... we' d help redirect it... create a future.

"I had seen Crass play many times... and had become friends with several of them... I' d have to say yes the politics of their lyrics did influence me as they were representative of what was going on at the time... they were a little older than us and had been involved in 'movements' in the past, were artistic and easy to get along with.

"They had a vision that made a lot of sense, were not about ripping people off and were genuinely trying to create something... above all open and honest."

As a couple, he and Deno set out to start the band first recruiting two young punks named Fox and Vomit as drums and bass respectively. The line-up was rounded off with Lou making the group one of the early punk bands with women and men playing together without traditional roles. The still macho world of punk rock was forced by many anarcho bands to rethink their attitudes and Lou especially found herself in that role as guitarist. Struggling against the macho façade was part of DIRT's concept from the start.

With a stable line-up quickly assembled, the name DIRT was chosen.

Gary, "The name Dirt came about as a result of the way people treated us as punks. Punk at that time wasn't the 'trendy' MTV thing it is today! It was seen as ugly and threatening. People used to attack you verbally and physically. You were refused service in bars and restaurants, etc."

From the start the imagism of nuclear holocaust loomed large in the lyrical field of DIRT. The renewed interest in CND in Britain as well as the TV show *Threads*, helped fuel the post-apocalyptic landscape that existed in the punk collective unconscious. As both antithesis and fascination, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were archetypes in the band's aesthetic.

It's only a matter of time
Before it happens here
'Cos down in Hiroshima
They live in constant fear
Don't let them con you it won't
Don't let them con you it can't
'Cos at this very moment
They are building a nuclear plant
Inside are all those chemicals
That make those dangerous gasses
All they need is one leak
And down will go the masses

As had always been the fuel that kept the intense dedication to punk rock alive, this feeling of desperation and frustration was a key part of the beginning of the anarcho punk movement. In the case of DIRT it was always best manifested in the early live performances. Further tearing down the separation between audience and artist, DIRT was one of the early punk bands to see gigs as a town hall sort of interaction rather than a performance to be observed with distance.

Gary, "The early gigs were chaotic and exciting.... We couldn' t get gigs at proper venues... always requiring demo tapes and 'play the music game' rules. So we would go out and find our own places... We' d never done anything like it before and it was a huge learning experience. I remember on one occasion we hired a church hall as if it were for a wedding reception. Got bands to play with, it was 'real' DIY... The audiences were similar people to us... the gigs were seen as meeting places for like-minded people. We made lots of good friends... people would produce their own fliers and distribute them. (The fliers were quite diverse... vegetarian recipes.... human rights.... news and gossip). You didn't have to be in a band to be part of the experience."

This new community was both mirrored and inspired by what was happening all around the country as well as a uniquely English history of counterculture going back 100 years. Crossing over two generations of agit-prop were Crass, who would inevitably begin a working as well as friendly relationship with DIRT, In 1981, they would become touring partners, which would continue throughout DIRT's existence.

Gary, "Crass had been touring with the Poison Girls for a number of years.... and then at some point in 1981 the two bands decided to stop playing together.

"I got a phone call from Steve saying they had a tour in the planning and were looking for a band to tour with... they liked the fact that we were different... i.e., not an all male band with female singer. (Dirt from the outset had made a conscious decision that this would never be the case).

"Plus our style and lyrics complemented what Crass were perceived as. On stage we were very non-macho-almost amusing at times and we had a professional approach to everything we did.

"Crass put out the *Object Refuse* EP... as part of their label and as a thanks to us for being part of what they were..."

Before the end of 1981, DIRT would release the 21st record on Crass Records, becoming the eighth band other than Crass to release music on the label.

The EP *Object Refuse Reject Abuse* was a four track 7" of sheer guitar sounds and rhythmic patters unlike anything else at the time. The white noise of the guitars were more reminiscent of Wire or Gang Of Four than the power chords of other early 80s UK punk bands. The screaming vocals were made powerful by the shameless commitment to the actual emotion rather than the specific lyric. Even groundbreaking punk women singers like Ari Up and Poly Styrene hadn't let go so completely.

Lyrically, the record continued with paranoid themes of

mistrust, alienation and its inevitable outcome of death. For the first time, DIRT became an acronym for Death Is Reality Today, headlining a suitably gothic photo of a graveyard accompanying a manifesto of sorts defining the many layers of oppression in society from war toys to global politics.

How can we expect to live in a sane world when we teach our children to play games of destruction, mutilation and death? Why do we let it happen? Is it that we don't care? Are we the passive herd? Are we afraid, too fucking scared, of what might happen if we don't follow the rules set out for us, those nice little media labels? As long as we continue to accept the violent state that we live in, things will only get worse.

The track "Democracy" in particular reinforces that sentiment.

engineered by John Loder at Southern.

Gary, "Recording was weird... never been in a studio before... it was good but also disturbing... in the sense that what may work live on a stage, sounds dreadful when you break down the individual instruments.

"Coupled with the fact that our equipment was the cheapest you could possibly get! And I seem to recall having to do my vocals over and over...

"Working with Crass was fun, inspirational and laid back. Southern Studios had a relaxed atmosphere and nothing was rushed. There was no obvious concept of time.

"Penny was and still is a craftsman. We worked together recently when he produced one of the Stratford Mercenaries CDs. He sees things from different perspectives and what at first seems odd to me... makes a hell of a lot of sense as time rolls by!"

The system is there
The system will stay
The system will rule
OK?
Birth control, life control, death control
Education of their wrong and right
Of their order and of their law
Don't take it
It's just a con
Don't take it
You know it's wrong
It's just a front
So they can use you
It's just a front
So they can cheat you
Object Refuse Reject Abuse

Gary, "Expression... the lyrics come from within... from things around us that happen to us, that we see."

Like most of the releases on the label, members of Crass were directly involved with the record both with layout and with studio production. On the cover, crime and war scene photos are juxtaposed with a collage of photos of band members as a bit of lighthearted fun against the backdrop of doom and gloom. Also, for the first time, the black and white skull image that would become associated with the band as a logo appeared.

Gary, "The text was done by me, the collage was done by Andy (Crass). The skull on the records which was also used as the band's logo was painted by an artist and best friend of the band... Leo!

"Many people have submitted to us what they feel it represents... No comment!"

The recording itself was produced by Penny Rimbaud and

The debut 7" by DIRT remains one of the classics of the period. Even at the time it was responded to warmly both in terms of sales and increased support at gigs. Also, DIRT were growing close with other like-minded bands on the Crass roster.

Gary, "Of course we related to the bands that were around us... in fact we shared musicians with Flux at one point. We did many gigs with the Mob (probably one of the best bands of the time).

"All the bands had something in common, a direction we all believed in and a hope for the future.

"We would pool resources, share equipment/vans and book shows for each other. We helped form networks around the UK that would allow bands from outta town to have a place to play and stay."

The end result of course being more and more tours around the UK, and not only with Crass who were their original touring partners.

Gary, "Dirt were always playing gigs... Between tours with Crass we would tour with the Mob / Anthrax / Polemic... The vinyl release helped in the sense that people knew who we were- other avenues were open to us, networks were getting bigger, clubs were phoning us to play."

With the Falklands War in 1982, the anarcho scene was one of the few still vocally opposing state sponsored violence. The wave of patriotism that swept the country further isolated the groups in the Crass camp and made life much more confrontational if not outright dangerous.

In the midst of records like *Sheep Farming In the Falklands* and *How Does It Feel?*, DIRT came up with their own instant response with a live record hastily put together as time was now consumed by the no longer theoretical struggle of stopping war and attacking its roots.

Gary, "Crass gigs were like military operations.

Everybody had a job to do. PA loaded in. Screens set up. Projectors and TVs. Backline. Banners hung from the ceilings. The whole room we played in was transformed.

"From the moment the doors opened there was something going on. Videos playing. Spoken word artists/poets/etc. between bands.

"The crowds were incredible, enthusiastic and very large.

"One downside being that 'Spitting' was very popular at the time! The more they liked you the more they spat. My guitar actually rusted after one tour.

"Some of the gigs were marred by troublemakers... At the time in the UK football (soccer) matches were a place of violence! Certain factions decided to bring this to the shows.

"Being politically motivated attracts a lot of intensity and anyone with an issue would show up!

"At one gig in Sheffield we were confronted by local people who had lost friends and family on board The 'HMS Sheffield.'.. A ship sunk during the Falklands War. I remember a group of us sitting backstage before the show, we explained what we were doing and about our anti-war beliefs. There was never any suggestion that we were attacking the dead. It ended on good terms and most people stayed to watch the gig. Very moving!"

The translation of politics lyrically to the reality of 80s Britain was becoming more and more defined which certainly explained why so many flocked to the movement. With poverty and then war, people were looking for answers and alternatives.

Gary, "Again this goes back to what was going on in the UK at the time. In 1980 England was involved in War games (Crusader 80) with the rest of Europe. The USA was using the UK as a base for nuclear weapons... We saw peace movements forming with the women at Greenham Common. Anti apartheid rallies were highlighting race issues in South Africa. War was seen as a real threat at that point. (And we all know 'War' is a good way of bringing a country together)!

"Then, as if by magic, came the Falklands War...

"The imagery we were using at the time was used because that was all that was available to us. People like us had little idea what the effects of war could be... those who were old enough for the war that ended in 1945 were a different generation.

"We had soldiers in Northern Ireland and we saw the watered down news reports that TV at the time would show. There was no Internet or satellite TV. Nowadays there is far more access to this kind of information... (yet still this shit against mankind goes on). We used what we could at the time."

But there were also more practical reasons for the follow up 12" to be a live recording titled *Never Mind Dirt-Here's the Bollocks*.

Gary, "Studio album was out of the question-our instruments / equipment hadn' t changed. Our material was raw and straightforward. We were more of a live experience anyway and it seemed this was the best way to go!"

Despite the live recording including much of the same music they had been playing live around the recording of *Object Refuse*, there was still an evolution with this record. It became clear on the record that their live show had become one single-minded entity that grew from song to song rather than just a collection of tunes like at a regular rock review. Also, the lyrical content was more heavily valued as they were written in the layout in a way that they needed to be read and contemplated as a separate entity. They didn't exist just to sing along with the punk anthems.

Gary, "It was deliberate... I call it art!"

Like the previous record, the back of this 12" included a rant that doubled as a poetic distraction from the noise. In some ways it could almost be assumed that the nature of the writing was in some way influenced (as many bands were) with the poetic style of the Mob.

As blue skies turn blood red
And destruction is abundant
Families cover in the squalor of their homes.
I'm bleeding; barely alive
But aware of my body hemorrhaging
Bleeding into the scenery
Of red rouged make-up parlours
A haze falls on toy town
And the child wonders why

At the same time, the band was doing more and more for the community with benefit gigs and involvement in political causes. This further shaped the band's education and of course affected the songwriting.

From the slaughterhouse comes a hateful cry
The soul is dead, the carcass to fry
Where is your mercy now God?
From the flesh that weeps to the blood that stains
Meat has no forgiveness
It just feels pain
Where is your mercy now God?
To live to meet the butcher's hook
To die for food to cook
Where is your mercy now God?
From the cradle to the grave
Is how we're brought to live?
But from the mud to someone's belly
Is no life for a pig?
There is no mercy now God.
There is no God
Amen

Gary, "My surroundings and people gave me my outlook. We did a lot of benefit gigs (various causes) and met lots of activists along the way. Some very close friends were active in hunt sabbing at the time... even going to prison for their actions.

"People who know me... know I don't read anything! (Still the same)."

Around this time, the band went back to Southern to record a single for the Crass imprint label, Corpus Christi. What should have been a single for the songs "Mother" and "Ripper" turned out to be the beginning of the end for the band as tensions turned to fighting in the studio resulting in a record never finished or released.

Gary, "The "Ripper" sessions were recorded for Corpus Christi... a spin off at Southern Studios. We were 'perhaps unwisely' left to our own devices... we ran up a huge debt at the studio... couldn't agree on sound or a final mix and ended up in one of our familiar 'disagreements.' It was shelved... and is probably still in the vaults at Southern!"

Incomplete mixes of the songs would later appear on the *Black And White* retrospective double LP.

That year ended for the band with the famous Zig Zag festival.

Gary, "The Zig Zag was certainly an event. We put out notice that it was to be at the Rainbow Theatre. Then the night before... The Zig Zag was taken over, electric turned on and we were in. I drove the van with the backline in it... Met by police at the door who didn' t know what to do, so they did nothing. It was a great day-all the bands and the audience alike were friends by this point... It was a party. We had all come a long way together and this was indeed a turning point-where could things go after this?"

But with Lou already moonlighting in Flux Of Pink Indians, the band simply unraveled.

Gary, "The band had pretty much exhausted itself by this point. We felt we had done a lot... grown a lot... Lou had left. Fox, who was the drummer, had had enough. The antics of me and Deno had caused a lot of rifts between us all and those around us... For some time me and Deno were pretty explosive (not physically) in each other's company. We had trouble agreeing on anything-we were still sharing a house and domestic issues and relationships weighed heavily on what we were doing..."

Lou would go on to play guitar for Flux Of Pink Indians on their second LP. Fox and Vomit had a bleaker future.

Gary, "Fox and Vomit were brothers. Fox sadly died about a year later. Vomit went on to play in a few non-political local bands..."

The band lay dormant for two years when Gary and Deno decided to get another line-up together in 1984. Finding a couple of guys named Paul and Richard to join on bass and guitar respectively, they made the controversial decision of hiring Stuart Bray on as drummer.

Bray had got his start in the band the Waxwork Dummies. But by 1982 he was drumming for controversial Oi! band Special Duties. While mostly known for their singles *Violent Society* and *Police State*, the band became notorious after releasing the *Bullshit Crass* single. Lead singer Steve Arrogant claimed "we wrote the song because we felt the fun element had gone out of punk and all the Crass style bands had made it too gloomy and too political. In hindsight, the record probably killed the band!"

Fearing violence between in the audience, Special Duties found most of their gigs canceled with the release of that single and bands like the Dead Kennedys refused to allow Special Duties gig with them.

All the more ironic that two years later Stuart Duties would wind up in the revamped DIRT. Stuart is, incidentally, now drumming again in the newly reformed Special Duties.

Gary, "I had been working with some friends for a while and written some new material... that project ended before it saw the light of day... not wanting to waste what I' d been doing I put it to Deno who then added her contribution... The new line up was made up from friends who were people we lived and hung out with-it just kind of fell into place. What could possibly go wrong?

"Paul and Richard took over on bass and guitar and Stuart (ex Special Duties) on drums. This caused a little controversy... but that's life!

"We used the name Dirt 'cos the lyrics/music had always been written by me and Deno and this was still the case.

"The idea was the same-we had taken time out, felt refreshed and ready to continue (this line up was the only time that Deno was the only female in the band). We felt we had played a large part in a movement that made people aware of sur-

roundings and options. And we still had potential and things to say!"

Despite an ongoing interest in the band live, the gigs had taken on a completely different atmosphere as crossover had now hit both sides of the Atlantic.

Gary, "Gigs at that time were taking on a new lease of life. Violence at gigs was by now a common occurrence. Music tastes had changed (not from my perspective). Every new band seemed to be heading towards Black Sabbath riffs. We toured with Antisect for the most part. We even ended up all living together at one point (hell... in case you were wondering)!

"Other bands such as Toxic Waste and Crucifix joined us on some tours."

After a bit of touring and a set of new material, the band recorded a demo. Satisfied with the sound, they decided to release the record on their own in a limited pressing.

Gary, "God alone knows this one.... We recorded and released it ourselves. (because we could)... Limited to 1000 vinyl copies only.

"In hindsight it was a demo of material we were working on. I think it would have been better if it was recorded a year later! But a year later and it wouldn't have seen the light of day."

What would turn out to be the bands only studio LP, *Just An Error* was a 12 song outing. Rudimentary and extremely proficient punk, the record was quite different from the joyous noise of the previous line-up. Despite the efficiency of this solid record, the band were unsatisfied when faced with the end product causing reflection on the nature of the band itself.

Gary, "DIRT had a different feel than the previous line up. The tensions weren't as high between us all and we didn't seem to have to work too hard to make things happen for ourselves. The energy wasn't right and it seemed hard to focus on a direction. I feel, looking back... that we felt we had something to say, but it was more like letting off steam and wasn't working."

In terms of what Deno was doing lyrically, however, it's easy to see forward progress. While maintaining the political ideas that helped make them DIRT, the story-telling was evolving.

Sitting here on a merry go round
Just waiting for the world to stop
The night is fading the dawn is nearly here
And I feel so tired I could drop
There's a shadow in the distance
With a gun in his hand
And his mind is on shoot to kill
Then a shout comes up from the back of the crowd
To fire at ones own will
Then one by one they fall to the ground
And for a moment I think I'm not there
Then I open my eyes and I'm still going round
Bu my mind is tortured with fear

With the release of this quickly out of print record, the band continued to tour eventually splitting when Stuart left the band to become a father. Gary and Deno also decided to go their separate ways.

Six years came and went before Gary got the urge to get the band together again. It would turn out that Deno was thinking along similar lines as both had continued to write music separately. But it was the oddest band that inspired the reincarnation.

Gary, "My best friend at the time was working for a music magazine. She took me along to see a band called Daisy Chainsaw... It was one of the first gigs I had been to in years. Fucking incredible!

"I was so motivated that I called Deno... who I hadn't seen for a long time. Our lifestyles hadn't changed but we had gone in different directions... We got together and decided to work it through... It turned out that we were both still writing material... And our different experiences had caused us to feel strongly about what we had done in the past. About the same time as we were doing this I got a call from Ali of Hellkrusher. He had heard from friends that me and Deno were working together and made us an offer! He had made some contacts and was booking a small tour for his band. We went along on a kind of low key "see how it goes." It went well for us and we were all fired up!"

Karen, Mick, and Stef were the recruits on guitar, bass, and drums.

Gary, "DIRT always ended up in turmoil, so new blood was required. The others in the band had been in some bands before, but I' d never seen them and can't remember the names... (not selective memory I assure you).

"The new people were friends of old, except Karen who had been recommended as a guitarist."

With the new line-up in place and some gigs under the belt, the band recorded a six song demo while in Ireland. *Feast Or Famine* was eventually publicly released to much success.

Gary, "Originally it was done as a demo whilst on tour in Ireland. The reason it was only on cassette was that it was only a demo and we could press them as and when required!"

With the band back now in force, interest from newer, second and third generation anarcho labels expressed interest in releasing music by DIRT. The first release would be the *Scent of the Kill* EP on Germany's Skuld Records. The four song EP was an odd mix of material considering it was the band's first vinyl release in over six years.

The first track was "Lunacy," originally on the *Feast Or Famine* tape. The b-side was made up of two cover versions from the band Toxic Waste, "Listen Morons" and "Plastic Bullets." The only other DIRT original was "Hated."

Gary, "I think the reasoning behind it was that the cassette had actually sold about 1500 copies and to put out the same songs on vinyl would have felt like we were cheating somebody. Plus the cassette was good enough in its own right. "Lunacy" and the other songs that formed the two 7" singles were Deno' s new direction in writing. Taking on a more personal direction and those of women's rights. The two Toxic Waste songs were added because Deno had performed with them on a tour and we had incorporated both songs in our set."

Their dealings with Skuld seemed to have been instigated by their old touring partners, Hellkrusher.

Gary, "Can't remember all the finer points... but I recall Hellkrusher had dealings with Kleister... we talked and it seemed like a good idea. We had no finance to put anything out ourselves and Skuld has a good network. Kleister was good to work with and easy to get along with."

The two originals were clearly more evolved stylistically than any previous DIRT release. While marinating the sad bitter edge of the earlier writing, the new songs were equally personal.

Beat me 'til I'm black
Beat me 'til I'm blue
But I'm not giving in to the likes of you
Living in the sanctity of love
Living in the sanctuary of love
Living with this lunacy called love
Nowhere left to hide
Nowhere left to run
You can't undo things that you've already done
Hold me to the sky
Bring me to my knees
Pretend I don't care
But baby don't tease
Now I've had enough
I'm walking through the door
But you can't make me stay
Cause I can't take no more

Artistically, the cover took on a new ethereal mood.

Gary, "It's easy to put out a record and miss the point that art plays a strong point in what you do. (Gone are the days of photocopies and stencil/ letraset etc)... I think we realized that artwork was 'not' a strong point in our list of talents! We decided that someone more artistic should be involved. Lin Cummins, artist/photographer was given the space..."

Around the same time, they were approached by the US label Tribal War for a split with the US band Mankind? (will that girl please put down her lyric sheet!).

Gary, "We had played with Mankind? on a few occasions. Tribal War were releasing some of their material and asked if we were interested in putting something out... We had two tracks from the same recording session as the Skuld 7" so... released a split. They were seen as the US version of DIRT! (Well... at least soundwise).

"Ideologically, hard to say! On the surface, probably, but we are worlds apart. We are much older! A little wiser? More jade, more cynical, better looking, we face different problems to them, different lifestyles, different backgrounds...

"We are all part of the same scene and I consider Stacey and Bill to be really good friends of mine."

But soon things were changing again. For various reasons, Mick and Stef would leave the band to be replaced with Russ and Stick. Stick, of course, the famous British drummer for hire who started with Doom and went on to play with just about every other great UK hardcore band of the early 90s.

With a renewed interest in anarcho punk in the states after successful visits from bands as diverse as Citizen Fish and Chumbawamba, DIRT were offered a US tour with Fair Warning and Hellkrusher. The tour started on an ominous note as drummer Stick was stopped and turned back at immigration to be momentarily replaced by New York drummer Julian. With two days practice he managed to sort out a set's worth of material. Not nearly as easy as it sounds and it does not sound easy.

Gary, "It was our first US tour. I think we were all really impressed that the scene was thriving on its DIY level- the enthusiasm was overwhelming and we met tons of good people and bands.

"It seemed odd at times... the age gaps between us all. All ages shows mean that majority of audience are under 21. The tour was great... three bands traveling in two vans. We covered a lot of ground but didn't make it to the West Coast... there's only so much time you can put into touring in one go-that's why we came back later the same year.

"Subsequent visits have led me to the conclusion that whilst the 'punk movement' appears to be growing, when people get to 21 they tend to avoid all ages shows, leaving bands with a new audience to play to-unless they start playing in bars!

"Some of the best moments that I recall...a two day party in Minneapolis! Hanging out in Dallas on a very hot day! Playing an AA club in Long Beach and having to pass breath tests to get in! Riot police stopping the shows in LA and again two days later in Phoenix. Falling in love a couple of times..seeing the Redwoods / deserts / truck stops / some presidents cast in a mountain? Getting to play with Aus Rotten and Naked Aggression... Seeing how Tribal War Records works! No real bad points... although everyone can remember me and Deno not talking...

"The tour was in two parts... a lot of people don't realize what a lot of stress touring can be-you don't have a proper bed, a place to call your own, endless driving, sleep deprivation, having to be nice to the 50 people who have trekked three hours to see you. The noise on stage every night, drinking & partying, even if you don't want to-basically its a roller coaster that you can't get off, and it is hard work. All for the 45 minutes performance everyday.

"Add to that five shows in the Midwest were canceled and you end up camping cause there's no money for the 15 people on the road and it's hell! (we are punks, not hippies).

"So the tour has to be broken down into smaller segments!"

Not an uncommon story for touring bands, the US was a slow burn that resulted in skilled guitarist Karen to leave the band. She was replaced for the second half of the US tour with a girl named Debbie who left soon after. She in turn was replaced by Gus. More band fighting led to the departure of Russ the bass player to be replaced by Cecille. This would be the band's final line-up.

Gary, "Cecille was a girl we met in France and gave her a lift to Italy! She stayed on the whole tour and then came to visit us in UK. She took over as bassist after more arguments within the band..."

Back in the comfort of the continent, the band continued to tour eventually recording one last LP of a live gig. The self-released album was titled *Drunks In Rusty Transits* and would be the only record of the band's last line-up though only one song, "Manhunter," had been previously unreleased.

Gary, "*Drunks* came about after the European tour where the van (Transit) we were driving started to fall apart... everyday a bit fell off due to rust and we spent hours pushing the bloody thing!

"Add to that it was a pretty extreme tour... two bands in the same van... lotsa arguments all round. And alcohol... D.I.R.T became an acronym for Drunks in Rusty Transits!"

The band would finally call it a day for good. But not with one last totally chaotic tour.

Gary, "Deno phoned me a week or so before the tour started and said she wasn't going to do it... she had said this to me many times before... so I didn't believe her. Not sure of the reasons... got some ideas... but we never really discussed it.

"Final Warning had flown into the UK already, a van was bought between us, ferry tickets, albums pressed and a tour was ready... As soon as I realized Deno was for real... I phoned Stacey (of Mankind?, vocally very similar) and convinced her to fly here for a six-week tour!!! Two days later she arrived and off we went-no rehearsals! She saved the tour. She was great.

"The majority of people who saw us didn't realize we had a different vocalist. The fact that she was probably younger than most of the audience didn't seem to play a part in this! (it's an older scene in Europe). Obviously there were a lot of people who knew Deno and were upset at her absence... but..."

With Deno out of the band there was never any consideration to tour at that point.

Gary, "No. Never. DIRT was... me and Deno."

The constant tension that fueled the band and made them so unique had no choice but to ultimately engulf them.

Gary, "Understatement! Dirt was fueled by the fact that me and Deno could not get along. We were/are both passionate about what we do and both very headstrong. We couldn't agree on anything! This was really hard for other members of the band. They would always be caught in the crossfire. It did make touring difficult... but we got a new lease of life when we toured with Hellkrusher... they seemed to suffer more from us than we did!

"In fact it caused them to split a few times! Later we did the same to Final Warning... but by this point me and Deno were always traveling in different vans. Our saving grace! Many tours we never actually spoke to each other! But if you' d seen us on stage you' d think we were family."

Gary still plays music-last seen in the States with the Stratford Mercenaries.

Gary, "Stratford is different to DIRT... for a start, Deno wasn't bald! (joke-Steve). It's a lot less 'in your face' politics! I see Stratford as an extension of what I personally did before... I have the role of pulling Stratford together-from rehearsals to tours to artwork to the website to communicating with everybody... I like to take charge of everything I do... I find it hard to hand responsibility over to anyone. The audiences are pretty much the same, young... (maybe cos we are a 'little' older). I think times and attitudes have changed a lot. I see things different-ish nowadays. It's sometimes hard to relate, but I usually manage pretty well!

"I seldom reflect on specifics of the band, but I know that was a huge part of my life. I am fortunate that I have remained in contact with a lot of people who I met over the years. I also know the band played a huge part in other people's lives, be it good or bad!

"I'm happy to say I'm still actively involved in the punk scene... It still causes me some controversy-like the guys who say, "15 years ago you said..."

"I can't always be bothered to deal with people anymore on this level. It seems that whatever you say is set in stone for someone to criticize later! I occasionally play some tracks, and it makes me feel good that DIRT was totally different to the other bands playing during that era... I still think we were more of a live experience and not the best musicians...

"I'm still in touch with most ex-members... see a few of them on regular basis. Stef (drums) is often working with local bands. Stick is occasionally playing with Stratford when Phil is busy elsewhere. None of the others are... I think me and Deno put them off for life!

"If the anarcho punk politics hadn't evolved the way they did... then I think things would be a lot different today...

"The 'anarcho punk rock' movement over the years has shown itself to be perhaps the most influential of any generation. Punks have been prominent in demonstrations, protests, promoted vegetarianism, squatting (as an alternative for housing crisis), fought racism, human, and animal rights, have their own music scene and venues, have communities that exist around the world offering places for people to stay and communicate.

"We should all be proud of what we did... DIRT played its part. I also feel very proud that we did change the world! (Well we helped...)"

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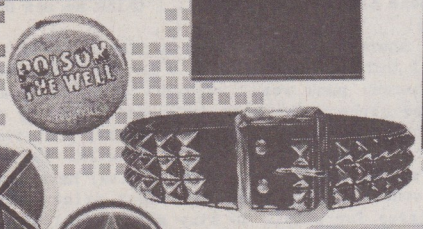

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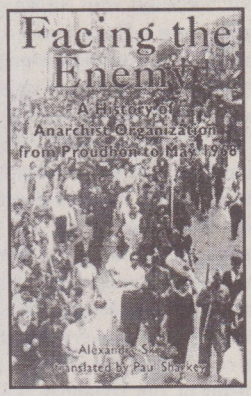
BOOKS

Facing the Enemy: A History of Anarchist Organization From Proudhon to May 1968
Alexandre Skirda
292 pages • $17.95
AK Press • 674-A 23rd Street • Oakland, CA • 94612-1163



Skirda's book *Facing the Enemy* is in many ways an unfortunate book. In a historical moment where anarchist organizations are attempting to find a voice, a clear volume illuminating their history, its successes, its mistakes, and its legacy, would be useful. In its stead is a document that spends far too much time discussing intra-anarchist sectarian struggles and not enough on how exactly anarchist organizations have "faced the enemy". Moreover it spectacularizes one character (Bakunin) as the representative of the one true anarchist dream and subordinates every other tendency (even organizational ones) to his influence. Finally the anarchist struggle is portrayed as a partial struggle, against the state, expressed by syndicalists, and having found its best expression in The Organizational Platform of the Dyelo Truda Group (in 1926).

Skirda is clearly an experienced and informed anarchist partisan. His opening chapters inform the tradition of anarchism well by skimming over the contributions of Godwin, Proudhon, and Stirner who, while being important members of the canon, are precursors to a history of anarchist organization. The introductory case is built that the anarchist tendency arose out of a criticism with socialism's fetishization of the "greater good for the greater number", which was in turn a criticism of bourgeois individualism. Herein lay one of the fundamental tensions that still concerns anarchism: how exactly do we reconcile the role of the individual in society and in organizing for social change?

Another fundamental tension is the prioritization of social change (that is "the revolution") over the vision of the ideal society. Facing the Enemy concerns itself with those anarchists most interested in agitating for social change. Specifically the last third of the book (and the entirety of the appendices) reclaims "the Platform" (The Organizational Platform of the Dyelo Truda Group (Makhno and Arshinov being the notable historical figures)) and its history as an anarchist response to the Russian (Soviet) Revolution. Skirda also highlights those aspects of anarchist organizing that most directly affected France which, while being a less developed history than most of the rest of the continent, is clearly a separate project (and should have been the cause of a different book) than a history of anarchist organization. The result is a very lopsided expression of what is a great deal of the depth of the anarchist tradition: its vision of a better world.

Bakunin was a complicated man. Known (at one time or another) as being anti-Semitic, a nationalist, a nihilist, a freemason, an insurrectionist, and the most militant anarchist in all of Europe. His biography is usually pulled out as demonstration of what the anarchist spirit given birth looks like. Skirda's analysis of Bakunin focuses on the time of the IWMA (International Working Mens' Association or "The First International") when most accounts describe Bakunin as being of two minds on the question of the organizational mechanisms that would overthrow the state. On the one hand, Bakunin agitated actively in clandestine anarchist organizations and was associated with Netchaiev (author of the humorously Machiavellian Catechism of the Revolutionary). On the other he is seen as the father of collectivist anarchism and expressed this approach to organization.

"...substitute collective thinking and collective action for all individual ventures in the social revolution, there will be room only for collective thinking, resolution and action"

Skirda does Bakunin a disservice in the bulk of his text by only describing his legacy in terms of Skirda's preference of his political manifestations. While Bakunin was clearly a revolutionary who believed that collective action against the state was the only way to destroy it, to narrowly define exactly what "collective" meant to Bakunin is to demonstrate your (in this case the author's) bias, not Bakunin's. Bakunin was demonstrably not ideological on this issue. This is why most tendencies within the anarchism of the past 100 years claim an ancestry in Bakunin.

Skirda spends the greater part of four chapters dissecting and dismissing those tendencies in anarchism that he disapproves of. While (given his bias) it may have been better for Skirda to avoid discussion of the "propagandists by the deed", the illegalists, individualists, and anti-organizationalists all together, he chose to do so in a series of straw-man exercises. These anarchist segments did see a connection between their actions and the possibility of social change. Their behavior was extreme for their time (and even for ours) as they attempted to practice anarchism in the present instead of just seeing their work as toward an anarchism in the future (within these groups can be seen the origin of vegetarianism, abstinence from alcohol and drugs, and communalism — as in moving away from civilization into a commune — in the anarchist tradition). Judged on their own terms many of these groups were abject failures, given that they carried the baggage of their times and the suppression faced by all libertarians, but the successes are not worth mentioning by Skirda.

Finally the book concludes on the topic that actually interests the author (there are chapters on the events of Spain of '36 and May of '68, but they are tacked on and brief, given their relevance to the topic). Upon the failure of the anarchist efforts in the Soviet Revolution many of the Russian expatriates attempted to articulate (in manifesto form) the reasons for the failure. The result was The Organizational Platform of the Dyelo Truda Group (or the General Union of Anarchists), which stated the reason as being due to the lack of a large, serious, and active organization advocating anarchist principles. Specifically the Platformists (as they have come to be known) advocated for a single General Union with which to leverage a unitary strategy against the state. Moreover they considered a synthesis project (one which gathers representatives from different tendencies) to be inept. Their specific political goals were anarcho-communism, which is a classless, stateless society, confederated as radically democratic self-managed workplaces and communities (paraphrased from the modern Platformist/anarcho-communist group NEFAC).

The responses to the Platform are dealt with in a generally dismissive way as demonstration of the reasonableness of the authors. While there were clearly very partisan and bitter responses to the Platformists' aims of creating a disciplined, organized anarchist movement, there were also the entirely reasonable criticisms of anarchists like Malatesta that Skirda ignores (outside of printing Makhno's responses to him). Malatesta's conclusion regarding the Platform is worth repeating:

"...Those comrades are obsessed with the success of the Bolsheviks

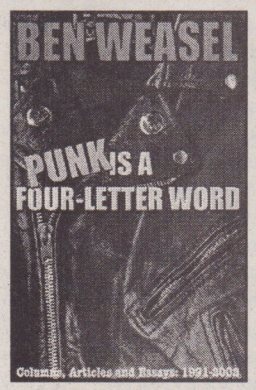
in their country and, like the Bolsheviks, would like to gather the anarchists together in a sort of disciplined army which, under the ideological and practical direction of a few leaders, would march solidly to the attack of the existing regimes, and after having won a material victory would direct the constitution of a new society. And perhaps it is true that under such a system, were it possible that anarchists would involve themselves in it, and if the leaders were men of imagination, our material effectiveness would be greater. But with what results? Would what happened to socialism and communism in Russia not happen to anarchism?

Those comrades are anxious for success as we are too. But to live and to succeed we don't have to repudiate the reasons for living and alter the character of the victory to come.

We want to fight and win, but as anarchists—for Anarchy."

Which highlights the problems with Facing the Enemy. In the author's exuberance for the Platform and organizations similarly conceived, his focus seems to have shifted away from what exactly an explicitly anarchist struggle should look like, or (for that matter) what sort of an anarchist conclusion would be wrought from the Platform. Which is not to say that there is not vitality in this examination, but the project of a written history of anarchist organizing over the past 150 years has only been half-completed by this book. —Aragorn!

Punk Is A Four Letter Word • Ben Weasel
176 Pages • $12.00
Hope And Nothings • PO Box 148010 • Chicago, IL 60614-8010



For those of you not in the know, not only is Ben Weasel frontman for Screeching Weasel, the most influential pop-punk band since the Ramones, he was also a columnist right here at MRR. Weasel was always one of the most confrontational columnists and for my money one of the best this magazine has ever had. This book collects a bundle of miscellaneous writings spanning 10 years including a number of columns he wrote for Maximum during his five years (90-95) here.

There seems to be no real theme to this book, as columns are mixed with stories and essays. This mismatch doesn't detract from the book as it reads well and flows, even though the pieces have no thematic connection. The connection, though, is Weasel's writing style, which is crisp and lean with no flowery language or wasted words, and whilst his ability to convey his message has visibly improved throughout the last decade his method of delivery remains as direct. There are a number of columns in which Weasel rails against being in band, complains about "the kids" and how horrible it is to be on tour;

"Look, I don't really give a fuck about the punk scene today. I don't know what you call it when you're miles past jaded and disillusioned, but that's where I am". (MRR '94)

Part of me always wants to scream "don't fucking do it then" when I hear people bleating about how hard it is being in band and how much they hate the audience. On the other hand, it is this kind of stuff that makes Weasel the genius that he is, I always felt he had one foot in the punk movement and one foot out, and no matter how hard he tries to distance himself from it he just gets pulled back in. His columns often mirror these internal dilemmas, his love/hate relationship with the "scene" and the music business as a whole. This alienation and cynicism makes Weasel's writing more biting and vitriolic, who better to criticise the insular punk scene than one so linked to it?. The columns relating to signing to a major and "making it" are as relevant now as they were back in the early '90s. What is interesting is his take on bands signing to majors. Weasel's argument against is not based on ethics, but finances — it doesn't pay to be a punk band signing to a major label. It is this kind of writing which goes against the grain, giving Weasel his reputation as being controversial and opinionated. There has always been a real lack of writers with any balls in the punk scene and Weasel's writing still comes as a breath of fresh air amongst the ego stroking and backbiting as it did a decade ago. The beauty about much of Weasel's columns is that he is never afraid to say what he thinks and to back it up with reasoned argument.

The one piece of writing in this volume about music which I couldn't relate to at all was the last and most recent essay entitled "The Infinite Joys Of Being A Professional Musician" where Weasel gives advice on how to survive as a professional punk band. Talking about roadies, record contracts, band leaders and the like just seems so clinical and rock 'n roll and not my idea of punk... however, I'm sure it is valuable info for those wishing to take that path.

More than half of the book is taken up with stories (some appeared as columns, others in his own 'zine Panic Button) and it is these which are the real meat of the book. Weasel's writing style seems effortless, the reader is sucked in right from the start and carried along for the ride. For such a cynical fucker Weasel is one funny guy, the stories about running away from home, delivering newspapers, hanging out backstage with Nirvana, the horrors of working low-paid jobs, running, being in a Ministry video, etc., are all sheer genius. They are both engaging and witty, having a strong narrative flow whilst remaining short and to the point. In terms of style one might reference George Tabb or Ben Hamper's "Rivethead" for the self-depreciating authorial voice and the "average guy getting by" feel to the stories. I wish the whole collection was made up these kind of stories and it is after reading these that I am encouraged to check out Weasel's novel Like Hell and wait patiently for more of this kind of writing.

With all his attacks on the punk politics, Weasel has always been a supporter of this 'zine and has always supported it even though he hasn't necessarily agreed with the co-ordinator's actions or decisions. This is important is establishing the fact that while Weasel is controversial and inflammatory at times, he is not reactionary nor contrary for the sake of it. Weasel's piece "Eulogy For a Friend" on the passing of Tim Yohannan is a really tender piece of writing and gives the reader an insight into Ben Weasel when he lets his guard down. I'm interested to know where his writing will take him. This collection is clearly aimed at the punk scene, with its very punk-centric slant. Whilst I don't always agree with the man, I surely do miss him as a columnist and there is no denying his skill as an engaging competent writer who could easily transcend being a punk rock fanzine contributor to being a bona fide novelist... here's hoping anyways. —Tim Brooks

Punk Rules OK • Chris Walter
227 pages • 11.95 US
Burn Books • Available through AK Press

Every person who has ever grown up poor, or at some point in their life been down on their luck, fantasizes about winning the lottery or striking it rich suddenly. What would I do with a million bux? What would you do? I have to say that a million bux isn't what it used to be. I mean there was a time in my life when my brother and I could sit around for at least fifteen minutes hypothesizing about the many ways in which we'd spend such a sum. Today, forget about it, especially here in the San Francisco Bay Area. I could pay off my bills, buy a new bike and a two-bedroom home. That would just about do it. Maybe I'd have some left to press a record or two, and then another issue of Urban Guerrilla Zine, but that would be a fairly responsible move, something I'm not known for. Chris Walter, the author

of *Punk Rules OK*, decided that his main character "Meatboy" would find a million dollars in an abandoned backpack that someone had left on a park bench. He finds this backpack after getting loaded the night before and getting his ass beat senseless by Canadian rednecks. Oh, yeah, this story takes place in Canada, which means that a million is worth more than it is in the United States, which is kind of irrelevant because Meatboy doesn't plan on buying a new house, although like all d.i.y. punks with a wad of extra cash he does plan on pressing a record by his new band. Meatboy is an old-school punk, which doesn't mean that he is really that old, but it means that he likes older punk or "old school" as they call it. He isn't PC, which is kind of obvious judging by his nickname which we learn comes from the fact that he eats meat. He is also a little belligerent, sort of in that Duane Peters kind of way, which is almost likable, and at least a little entertaining, especially if you are Duane Peters, who is around forty. This character is still in his twenties, which makes him seem sort of lame to me, but I'm sure there are kids out there who still like the QUEERS and bands like DIESEL BOY who won't dwell on the fact that Meatboy and the punks around him are almost like those folks who live in the fifties or sixties, and wear vintage clothes, and who yearn for a simpler time when men were men and women were women, and the world was a simpler place in every way that it isn't today. You know, that time that never existed except in a bunch dumb, idealistic pop songs, and on television sitcoms that continue to rerun ever evening on cable television. Punk Rules Ok is fiction after all, and I guess you can't take things so serious when it's all in good fun, and no one is really trying to define, or make a statement about anything of significance here. Still, how would finding a million dollars change the life of someone like Meatboy?

First off, you know and I know that nothing in life comes free, and especially not a backpack filled with a million dollars. Chris Walter does a good job of writing (creating) a scenario where a corrupt politician falls into bed with a dangerous and powerful gangster/businessman, and as part of their deal an exchange of a million dollars must take place. Walter describes in detail the kind of corruption that we are encountering in this deal that has obviously gone wrong, and at no point did I ever find myself thinking it was in anyway far fetched, or lacking in the logical conclusion department. Chris Walter is obviously a very observant person, and writer, who has studied the ways that different people from different classes and occupations communicate and interact with one another. Yes, he's requiring the reader to suspend belief, but he does so without ever failing to ring true in his detail. Meatboy, as dramatic a person as he is, even rings true because I think we (Punx) all know a Meatboy. There's one in every scene. So, to bring this review back up to speed, we have Meatboy who finds a million dollars in a backpack, and you have corrupt politicians and gangsters tied to the million as well, and I guess I should mention that Meatboy is in love and chasing a girl who doesn't really feel the same, even with Meatboy's sudden wealth. So you know all hell is going break loose eventually, and there are several other mini-dramas taking place all along as well, and so you also know, like in a Quentin Tarantino film, that everything and everyone will collide at some point. When done the right way these types of stories just read like pure entertainment, and you never really have to stop to ask yourself why would so and so do this, or why would he turn left and not right. Sure, in retrospect some things can seem really silly, and even far-fetched, but we are talking about a punk rock version of an Elmore Leonard novel here, and not War and Peace. I'll admit it's hard to take anyone too serious when they think that blasting the QUEERS and DIESEL BOY is totally fucking punk rock! I mean, c'mon. That doesn't really matter in the end because the one thing that Meatboy does find due to his stroke of luck, and we wont say here whether it's the good or bad kind, is a punk band. He gets to join a band that is just like the one he'd probably fantasized about being in since the day he discovered punk, and that is worth more than anything to him. It even overshadows the love story in Punk Rules Ok, which to me makes this novel truly punk because we all have relationships in our life, but how many times do we ever find the right group of people that we can collaborate with in a musical way? To the point where you actually start playing out? I know lots of musicians, and none of them have ever approached me to really collaborate on an idea for a band. There is even a little of the business end of being a popular punk band covered in *Punk Rules Ok*, although that section reads a little like it's from another novel. That hardly matters though because *Punk Rules Ok* is good enough, and entertaining enough to survive a wrong turn every now and then. —Jay Unidos

The Satanic Screen: An Illustrated History of the Devil in Cinema • Nikolas Schreck
256 pages • $19.95
Creation Books

"Did you know that Mélies was a Satanist?" I love dropping that little bomb on my film classes. As a matter of fact, it is such a cool factoid that I mention it every chance I get. For some inexplicable reason, I want every film student to know that one of the earliest pioneers of cinema (every film history class starts out with his Trip To the Moon) made dozens of movies with Satanic themes, and actually WORE an ill-fitting red devil suit MOST of the time! Complete with cape and tail! This is in 1896!!

I was reading this strange little book while pregnant, in between heaves of morning sickness (which apparently lasts 24 hours a day, I might add), and I was alternately intrigued and impatient with Nikolas Schreck's guide to the Hoofed One on the silver screen. It is a fair-sized book, at 256 pages, and features, at minimum, a descriptive paragraph on each of hundreds of Satanic films—or, more specifically, films "in which Satan has a presence." Schreck includes filmmakers from the earliest silent cinema (like Mélies) to Hollywood movies (like the Elizabeth Hurley/Brandon Frasier version of Bedazzled) and even reaches into the deep corners of avante garde (Kenneth Anger) and porn (Gerard Damiano's The Devil and Miss Jones). Big budget, underground, new, old, horror, sci-fi, humor, trash, blaxploitation—you name it, Schreck finds Satan in there.

My favorite section during this delicate time was, of course, the discussion of Roman Polansky's Rosemary's Baby. I mean, who doesn't think about the incubus when they are pregnant, anyway? It goes hand in glove! There's a little man inside you! Of course Rosemary's Baby is also a classic film, with great acting and directing, and a particularly restrained and terrifying manifestation of Satan in Ruth Gordon and the other uptown ladies.

A strength of *The Satanic Screen* is the effort Schreck has put into researching and synopsizing the lesser-known European films of the early twentieth century. Perhaps most cinema students have seen The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, but not films like The Golem or The Student of Prague. I found Schreck's detailing of the chronology of these films, and notes about the trajectory of actors and producers from one film to the next, to be extremely thorough and informative. This is the area in which the author charts some new territory and makes his book different from others on the subject.

Unfortunately the book reads like a dictionary. Generally, a book that references over three hundred titles is usually sacrificing depth in favor of breadth, and Schreck's book is no different. It is definitely filled with facts (and abundantly illustrated), but I found myself wanting these facts to add up to something a little more potent. Schreck's book is all stick and no carrot. There is a significant effect, cumulatively, of contemplating the pervasiveness of cinema's relationship with Satan. But many readers probably won't stay with the book long enough to get that cumulative effect, because it is such an almanac.

It's noteworthy that Schreck is a self-described Satanist. This explains, in part, the almost nerdy thoroughness of *The Satanic Screen*. It is written in the template of a rail fanning digest—there's no critical distance from the subject whatsoever. With its exhaustive research and amazing range of films, the book will no doubt become a standard reference of the horror genre. But for enlightening analysis on the meaning of the Devil in cinema, you'll have to look elsewhere. —Greta S.

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

HELLO, DELHI

Britain's dynasty in India during the 19th century was due in no small part to its practice of "lagaan," in which poor farmers would be taxed for a portion of their grain every year. The irony of the practice—that a Third World country would have to pay a premium to support its own enslavement—isn't lost on director Ashutosh Gowariker or his writer/producer/star collaborator Aamir Khan. Neither, oddly, is its potential for humor. **Lagaan**, nominated for best foreign film this year, is as atypical a social protest movie as you'll see.

Just as British colonialism is going to seed, poor rural farmers have been suffering through years of parched earth that Monsoon rains refuse to break loose, and their grain reserves are running thin. Surly Captain Russell (Paul Blackthorne), head of the encamped British regiment, is weary of his remote post and wants a kick up some dust. First, he perversely tries to tempt the local Raj, a life-long vegetarian, into eating meat in exchange for a year without lagaan; but this fails. Always up for a good wager, he then inveigles handsome, hotheaded Bhuvan (Bollywood matinee idol Aamir Khan) into betting for not one, not two, but three years without the tax. It goes like this: If the locals can beat the crack Brit team at cricket—a game that has been eliciting the natives' bemusement for years—the townsfolk will win a reprieve from the draconian tax. If not, they have to pay three times the tax in one year.

You may wish to step back a moment to appreciate what's going on here. **Lagaan** is by far the most expensive Indian film ever made, a four-hour historical drama with song-and-dance musical numbers—on an obscure British game that elicits giggles anywhere on the planet (with the possible of England). The audacity...no, the clanking, brass-balled insanity involved in making this film defies logic.

You see, even if the film turns out to be a runaway world hit (unlikely), the film's length means it can only be shown maybe twice a day. And how many, say, Americans are going to pony over $7.50 to see a four-hour Indian musical about cricket?

I did. So did a sparse but knowing group at a local international theater. We loved every second.

Lagaan is crafted with that eye to middle-brow tastes that's always made good musicals succeed (even if, like me, you generally dislike musicals). Unlike the often silly production numbers you might see on Namaste America, the staging of each scene, whether it be in the planting fields or on the playing field, has a sincere humanity you can laugh with, not at.

The plot is economical, the cast filled with vivid stereotypes, and the exposition of facts brisk. The music, fueled by a thumping sitar backbeat, had the audience tapping their feet, and occasionally cheering. Nobody parted company with their seats through the whole movie (that is, until the short intermission).

The basic formula is familiar from movies as diverse as Andy Hardy and Shaolin Soccer, wherein a group of amateurs pull together under travail and achieve victory. Here, Bhavan recruits a group of villagers for their special athletic talents, and all of them need a little convincing (that's half the fun). By Bhuvan's insistence, the team even includes an untouchable, a humble man whose presence nearly rips apart the team. (It turns out that his disfigured arm is able to toss an untouchable screwball.) As for the Brits, they have a shifty-eyed pitcher who throws toe-breaking hardballs that threaten to decimate the entire Indian team. (And yes, Captain Russell actually complains about the Indian team by saying, "Say, that's not cricket!")

Happily, the home team has been well-tutored by the sympathetic sister of Captain Russell (Rachel Shelley), and has the moral support of beautiful Gouri (Gracy Singh), her rival in love for Bhuvan.

Director Gowariker keeps his scenes from veering too far into camp, and there's an airy naturalness to complex sequences like the first musical number—a sitar-pounding hymn on the hope for monsoon rains. Their salvation comes from a different place, and our salvation is this minor miracle of a movie.

Asoka, due for domestic release this autumn, follows in the same hyper-inflated Bollywood style. Like **Lagaan, Asoka** (pronounced "Ashoke") is also Indian, a musical, and an historical epic—but only two-and-a-half hours long this time, thanks to only three song-and-dance numbers. No matter. It compensates with blood-soaked battle scenes and palace intrigue thicker than blood.

Asoka is set around 250 BCE, with a set-design reminiscent of old biblical epics (and outdoor scenes that may have shadows inexplicably coming from three directions at once). It's based loosely on the actual life of a prince in the ruling Mauryan family whose taste for bloodshed eventually led him to become a Buddhist monk. Swarthy Prince Asoka (Shah Rukh Khan) is the worthiest of the emperor's sons to take on the mantle of power—but he's not next in line. Instead of bowing to tradition, he pursues, and wins, an endorsement to be king on the latter's deathbed. But the other princes feel as if they've been cheated, and set out to kill Asoka and retain their hold on decadent, jewel-encrusted wealth.

While in exile, the prince meets feisty Princess Kaurwaki (Kareena Kapoor), expatriated from the northern territories with her charge, the crown prince. They all form an alliance of sorts—not realizing, of course, that soon they'll be fighting on opposite sides of the battlefield for (in the case of Asoka) absolute power and (for the princess) simple equality under law.

Like one of those HK gunfight epics where everyone dies by the final frame, **Asoka** shows no mercy with its disposable characters, which perish in numbers sufficient to form thick mulch over the landscape. This is a more traditional example of the Indian musical epic, accessible but less compromising than **Lagaan**. The human details get a little preposterous in the interest of tying the plot details together, but it's a crowd-pleaser. After watching its array of the multiple false endings, you may feel exhausted by the final frame. You'll have to decide whether that's a good thing or not.

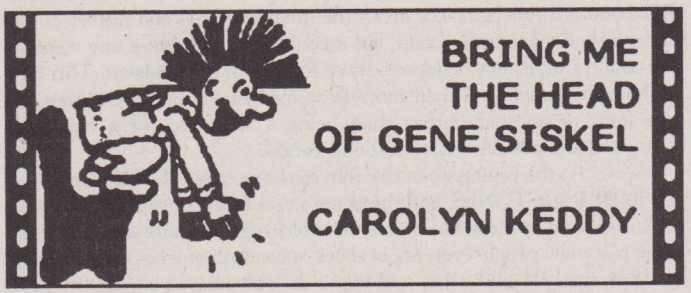
On the other hand, **Monsoon Wedding** almost revels in its feather-light triviality. Aditi (Vasundhara Das) is a middle-class girl who's nervous about her future. First, she's never met the man with whom she has an arranged marriage; second, once she meets the man (who turns out to be great catch), she realizes she isn't quite over her relationship with an old boyfriend. (Her boyfriend certainly isn't through with her.)

Monsoon Wedding is the tale of a Punjabi wedding, a frenetic working class celebration so costly that the father of the bride has to borrow from friends and to make his daughter's dream come true. It's also a tangle of romances, some nascent, others past their bloom. Dube (Vijay Raaz) is a wiry wedding planner who has put together over 150 weddings, but still hasn't found the girl who's right for him—until a shy, sensual young maid of the bride's parents (Tilotama Shorne) puts his eyesight in a fixed blur. Ria Shefali Shetty), the bride's cousin, is burdened by a family secret only she knows. And the parents realize that a whole era of their life is coming

to an end all too quickly.

Monsoon Wedding comes close to being an art-house chick-flick for the export market. There's full-frontal kissing (forbidden in Indian films) and lots of English dialog, so the US import market was clearly in the cross-hairs.

There are so many moments of easy angst and giggly celebration that you feel you're watching a cross-continental chapter of the **Ya-Ya Sisterhood.** The film's director of photography Declan Quinn attempts bring the film back down to earth with his handheld 16mm camera, which makes even the most contrived scenes seem real. Somehow, by its teary, watery finish, director Mira Nair manages to rein it all in, though it's a little too late for most of us.



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

LIBERATING THE MIND, BODY AND SOUL

It's really strange living in San Francisco. When I first moved to SF I used to joke to my friends back home that it was like everyone was always in a contest to see who could be weirder. It was before the world had accepted the punk rock look. The contest amused me for a while, but it had an adverse effect on me. I found I wanted to stand out less.

Cockettes (www.cockettes.com) is a completely San Francisco movie. It captures all the things I like and hate about people in San Francisco. They are crazy, interesting, eccentric, creative, and different. They are also very self-absorbed and cliquish. I know I'm one of them too so don't misunderstand me. I would never want to live anywhere else.

The Cockettes were a dance and performance troupe started by an actor named Hibiscus. It started with he and some friends from various Haight Street communes getting together at the Palace Theater in North Beach. Friday and Saturday nights the theater hosted midnight screenings of b-movies called The Nocturnal Dream Shows. The Cockettes did their first performance on New Year's Eve 1969-70. It was a short chorus line dance number. The Cockettes, named as an obvious parody of the Rockettes, were made up of men and women, straight and gay, talented and not so talented. It didn't matter, as long as you enjoyed getting dressed up and performing.

The Cockettes performance went over so well that they ended up performing every weekend. It started as simple, chaotic dance numbers. Most of the people on stage and in the audience were tripping on acid so it became one huge, wild mess. Everyone was dancing and singing to their hearts' content. Everyone lost at least some of his or her clothes. Things progressed so that the Cockettes' performances were more popular than the films. They began to develop entire shows with very fun titles such as "Gone with the Showboat to Oklahoma," "Pearls Over Shanghai," and "Tropical Heatwave/Hot Voodoo." They even starred in some films. The most courageous was Tricia's Wedding, which was their interpretation of what would happen at the highly publicized wedding of the president's daughter and shown on the day of the actual wedding. The parodies of the celebrity attendees in this film are hilarious.

Cockettes features some great footage of the members and performances during the late 60s, early 70s, along with interviews with surviving members looking back at their youth. The filmmakers David Weissman and Bill Weber really have a love and understanding for what the Cockettes were all about. Their film is a playful and fun as the people it is portraying. Different recollections of the same event are presented back to back confusing the details, but still bringing out the essence.

The Cockettes continued to get very popular. John Waters recalls how the crowd at the Nocturnal Dream Shows and the Cockettes were the first to embrace his films and made Divine into a star. The Cockettes' big break came when Truman Capote and Rex Reed attended one of their shows. Reed wrote about them and booked them into a New York theater. The opening night was a highly anticipated affair since New Yorkers had only read about them in magazines. The Cockettes antics didn't translate to the New York hipster crowd. When rock stars, movie stars and Warhol's friends showed up to see them, no one got it. The Cockettes were considered unprofessional and untalented.

Cockettes could be taken as the ultimate statement against selling out. Yet it is more of a celebration of being ahead of your time and doing what you want. When they returned to San Francisco, no one cared that New York was a bomb. They put on more successful shows until they disbanded in 1972.

A good documentary has to tell a story. When there is no story, you get yourself into a corner. **A Skin Too Few** (www.nickdrakefilm.com) is a short film that desperately wants to bring to light the mysterious life of singer Nick Drake. The biggest problem is that he doesn't really have a story to tell, even though it seems like he should. He was a happy child, learned to play guitar, went to college, recorded some albums, was afraid to play live, and committed suicide. Everyone knows these facts, yet there doesn't seem to be anyone who can tell what he was like. People who claim to have known him still don't have a grasp of what he was about. Even his family doesn't seem to know.

If you like Nick Drake's music, there are some great things about **A Skin Too Few**. Nick's sister Gabrielle plays a tape of their mother singing some songs that sound eerily like Nick's songs. That's solves one mystery. There is also a scene were Joe Boyd, the record producer, and John Wood, the sound engineer for Drake's records are sitting in a studio playing tracks from his tapes. John Wood plays separate tracks from the session, vocals and guitar, adding a new dimension to his musical output. There are also shots of his bedroom at his parents' house. The room has been perfectly preserved as he had left it. It's interesting to see, but it still doesn't seem to open anything up to me.

A Skin Too Few comes across more as an extended music video for Nick Drake. There are shots of his hometown and other places that were involved in his life while his songs play in the background. It paints a mood and demonstrates the state of loneliness Nick must have been in, but doesn't open up anything that the music hasn't already. Similar to Patrick Humphries' book *Nick Drake: The Biography*, **A Skin Too Few** digs at the clues, but still comes up empty-handed. One of the main things that stands out as missing is any film footage of Nick playing his guitar. He was known for his fear of performing, but his parents owned a movie camera providing the footage of Nick as a child on the beach. It is hard to believe they never took any footage of him playing guitar.

A Skin Too Few played with **In Motion** (www.xs4all.nl/~taohol/spell/motion.html) a brief look at the present life of saxophonist David S. Ware. Ware now spends his time driving a taxicab in New York, rarely playing music. He expounds on his philosophy of music while behind the wheel. The film is balanced out with Ware's music over a background of New York cityscapes.

There were a lot of documentaries this month. The one I was most looking forward to, **Culture Jam: Hijacking Commercial Culture** (www.culturejamthefilm.com), was also the most disappointing. Most people I know are fed up with the over-commercialization of everything. The idea of messing with corporate symbols and slogans is very appealing. Yet the people featured in this documentary weren't inspiring. The Billboard Liberation Front at least had a sense of humor, but the actions of Reverend Billy from the Church of Stop Shopping and Media Tigress Carly Stasko were pretty pretentious and seemed to be missing the idea.

The Billboard Liberation Front are a San Francisco organization whose main objective is using billboards to send out an alternative message. Their most famous work was a radio station advertisement improved to be an Exxon ad simply stating "Shit Happens—New Exxon" which coincided with the Valdez crash. Throughout the film we get snippets of the group planning and executing a new billboard campaign for dot.com companies advertisements lining Highway 101 South which leads from San Francisco to Silicon Valley. The new billboards were given an additional piece that featured a computer pop-up window that stated "Invalid Stock Value: Abort, Retry, Fail."

The members of the group are aware that their antics do nothing more than give commuters a chuckle in the morning. Spokesman for the group Jack Napier explains that he likes having nice things, a nice car, a nice meal—but the billboards need to be liberated. He also explains that they do no damage to the billboard. Their additions can be easily removed and they leave a twelve-pack of "good" beer behind for the workers who

are left to repair the signs. If you are interested in doing your own work, check out their website www.billboardliberation.com for all the help you need.

The other two culture jammers were less exciting. Media Tigress Carly Stasko walks around her home town of Toronto, Canada putting up small stickers on advertisements to get people to think. Reverend Billy raids the Times Square Disney Store preaching against Disney's sweatshop practices. What ruins it for him is his over-dramatic entourage that blows the whole illusion of what he is doing. When one laughing cameraman asks to be cured of his buying habits, the people in the store just look at them as if they are crazy, not even listening to what is being said.

Playing with Culture Jam: Hijacking Commercial Culture was **Bringing It To You ®TMark** (www.rtmark.com) a pretty ingenious parody of a corporate sales video. **®TMark** uses all the benefits allotted to corporations to achieve their goal of bringing anti-corporate sabotage into the public marketplace. Its bottom line is to improve culture by soliciting workers to commit the acts and investors to make it happen. The whole execution is extremely well done. I was sold. I cashed in my 401K and invested it in replications of US foreign aid food drops on impoverished areas of the United States.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

THERE, AMERICA, DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER?

"The Pentagon is now doing everything possible to give us the impression that war will come in a tidy little package...Now bodybags are 'human remains pouches.' Your sons and daughters and mothers and fathers will have their faces blown off, their limbs torn apart, their chests ripped open, but they won't come home in bodybags. They'll come home in neat and tidy human remains pouches."

This quote was made on the floor of the senate over a decade ago, and it was turned into graphic, along with a R. Crumb illustration, that appeared in a newspaper called *War News* from San Francisco. The paper published stories about the Gulf War that were not covered in the mainstream press. In 2002, how many newspapers would it take to cover all of the news and information that's not being reported in the mainstream press?

In case you are wondering why I would start a film column off with political subject matter, then I guess I should remind you that this is an underground column, written for punks and underground artists, so go take a long look in the mirror and decide whether or not you shouldn't be reading *Hitlist* or *Punk Planet* instead of wasting your time with this agitating rag. Oh, so with that in mind, one of the first things I'm going to write about is a music video sent in by the band F-HOLE, for a song entitled **I Need a Drink**. The video was shot mostly in Alameda, CA at Axis Records, which is an independent business owned by zine editor and punk rock frontman Joe Franke, who is an interesting guy, and a friend to many punks here in the Bay Area, myself included. He has been a very supportive member of both of the East Bay scene and the tiny Alameda scene, where he is respectfully referred to as the "Godfather of the scene."

With that out of the way, what is the objective of shooting a music video, especially when you are as small time and underground as F-HOLE? Are there cable stations where one can submit these types of DIY promo pieces, and even if there were, would a band like F-HOLE stand a chance in hell of being added to the rotation? It could be that the internet has a platform that supports efforts like this one, but how valid an outlet would that be if they actually broadcasted a video like this one? I could see it being used as part of a press packet that might be sent to labels, or something like that, and that would explain things, except for the fact that they sent it to this column. Anyway, the video is visually fine, the editing is maybe even a little better than any of us could do even after a couple of semesters at an art school, and the acting is cool (A cameo by Dan Tollbooth is especially humorous), but the music should be the point, and it would be a tough task to build anything on so weak a foundation. Take CLASH style riffs (Think "Clash City Rockers" or I guess any number of RANCID songs), and add an irritatingly bad vocalist belting out incredibly cliche lyrics about, shit, drinking, and there it is. This is DIY, and so if you are a fan of Epitaph or TKO style bands, then perhaps you should contact F-HOLE for a copy of this video at: www.f-hole.com

A pleasant surprise this month came in the form of a documentary about the St. Louis underground music scene entitled **STL2000. STL2000** is a timeless piece about the inner workings and history of the underground scene in St. Louis, but it could be about almost any scene in the country, especially, I suspect, those located in the Midwest. This film is about the people and their motivation for being a part of the scene in one form or another, rather than being a showcase for a bunch of unknown, and possibly great, St. Louis bands.

At the beginning of this film someone quotes Keith Richards of the ROLLING STONES, and the quote states that, basically, the greatest rocknroll band in the world is different every night because somewhere, at some place few people even know about, a band no one has ever heard of could be the best, and it has nothing to do with sales or popularity. Cool quote, and an easy one to make when you are a multimillionaire, rock star. Whatever. The point is, to me at least, is that scenes do need to be documented, and shooting video features like **STL2000** is one way of achieving this documentation. In the case of St. Louis in the year 2000, what's important and most interesting is the longevity of some of its most colorful scenesters, and the history of its zines, as well as the trend of many local clubs closing their doors to underground music at the end of the century, and all of those subjects given the extensive screen time they deserve. The least interesting aspect of **STL2000** is the music, which is beyond generic, except for the DIY spirit of the WRECKLESS ANGELS and some cool vintage footage of ULTRAMAN, as well as some key interview segments. I recommend **STL2000** for anyone in a local punk scene that is into film and video, because while it may not be a blueprint, it's a jumping off point for what can be done with new technology and a passion for your surroundings. To get this excellent film, write to: IBC Shadows Music, 318 Stewart, Desoto, MO 63020

Recently in this column we have highlighted some of the video work of Berkeley, California's Anarchy Al, who is part owner of the now infamous Collector's Realm 3 on the equally infamous Telegraph Avenue ('The Ave'). What a lot of people don't know, not even in the Bay Area, is that Al is a pretty prolific musician. Up until recently his practice videos have been a thing of legend, but Al has begun to make these videos more widely available (Write to the CR3 to order any of Al's videos, 2566 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA—510-540-1182). I recently got a hold of **Practice Videos #2** and **#3**, which are jam-packed with Al's one of a kind playing, which takes as it's influences the early years of DRI, and METALLICA almost as much as it does blues based heavy rock, and even some tribal influences. NIGEL PEPPERCOCK recently took **Practice video #2** on tour with them, screening it whenever possible, and if you saw it at one of their shows, then you know of which I speak. In the works is a supergroup based around Al's compositions, which will feature members of DYSTOPIA, CRUEVO, DRUNK HORSE, and others. Keep an eye and an ear out for that project. In terms of Al's most recent videos he's shot for other bands, which are available from him care of the CR3, you have: POISON THE WELL, NIGEL PEPPERCOCK, DEPRESSOR, BLOWN TO BITS, and WATCH THEM DIE at Kimo's in San Francisco. All of these feature excellent sound first and foremost, and then the picture quality is of course decent, although the POISON THE WELL and NIGEL PEPPERCOCK videos do stand above the rest in terms of overall picture quality.

Send your films and videos, and two cents to: Jay, PMB #419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709. Disintegration Records / Urban Guerilla Zine, PMB 4191442A Walnut Street,Berkeley, CA 94709 USA, www.wethepunx.com

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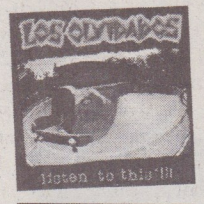

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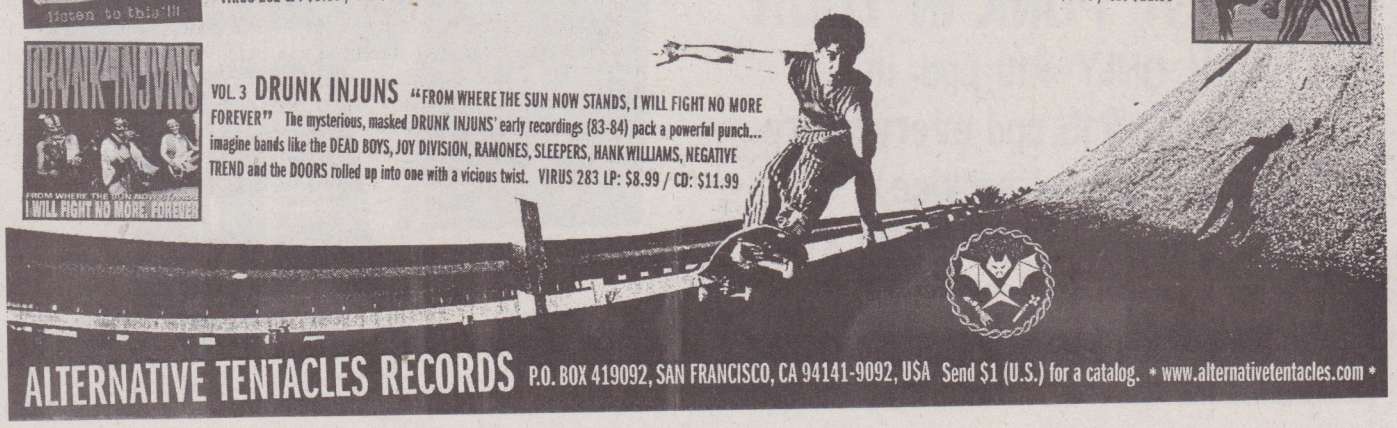

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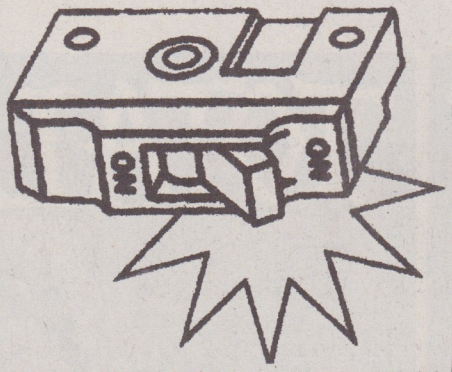

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ABRAHAM CROSS - "Peace Can't Combine" 12"

Distorted crusty attack which is heavily influenced by the almighty DOOM. Deep vocals, blown out recording, thick bass, brutal guitars—I think you know the score. Like a steamroller across your fucking face! For the fucking punx! (MT)
(Crust War, 1-28-3A. Shikitsu-Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka-City, 556-0017, JAPAN)

ACCIONE MUTANTE - "Must Be Stopped!" EP

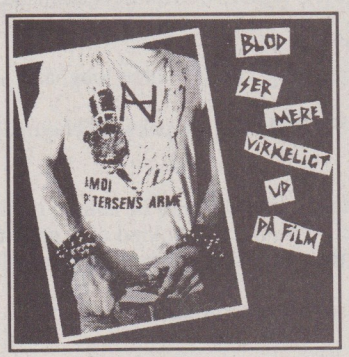
Four songs of raw-rawer-rawest one-take nastiness. The best punk record I heard this month, an absolute sandblaster of grit. There is a DEAD MOON cover on the A-side that merely functions as a tube for the band to blast fuzz through. I can only hope that this is a functioning band and not an archival document...more more! (RW)
(Ken Rock, Fabriksgatan 39B, 412 51 Gothenburg, SWEDEN)

ADOLF & THE PISS ARTISTS - "March of the Piss Artists" CD

Break out your mohawks. Reinforce those spikes and polish your slick- skinned head. ADOLF & THE PISS ARTISTS have unearthed some recordings from 1997-'98, and I implore you to please slam your very hardest in appreciation. I ain't the best judge, but I sense the kids will like this stuff. DRONES, CASUALTIES—do you really need a frame of reference? (RY)
(45 Revolutions, 620 Hansell St. SE, Atlanta, GA 30312)

AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ - "Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud Dá Film" EP

AMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ does it again. Man, I love this band. They go back to simple, BLACK FLAG-style punk rock, played really well. The recording is just the right quality, and I think I like this EP better than their first one (although that is worth checking out as well). Looking at pictures of this band, you wouldn't know that they are a fairly new band. It looks amazingly like 1981. With this kind of punk (that is styled after early '80s punk hardcore) I usually find the lyrics to be unimpressive. But I really like these lyrics, which add a lot to the musc. Although the translations "lose poetic value," they are well thought out and address both personal and political issues. (WR)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

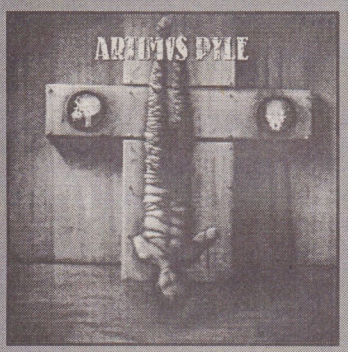


AMEBIX - "Monolith" LP

This 1987 follow up to their debut album *Arise* was a big disappointment in my eyes (or...ears I guess) as it lacked the tunes and rumbling intimidation of its predecessor. That said, if I knew the dirgy metallic crap that would come to represent hardcore in the close future I wouldn't have been so hard on it. The formula was still there but I didn't pick up the vibe man. The prototype for just about everything to come out of Nashville and Portland in years to come. Dark foreboding and rolling doom verges on insanity. So depressing! (AD)
(no address)

AMOEBA (RAFTBOY) - "Bad Fuggum from the Mysterium" CD

This group definitely had the all-star thing going on: John Morton from the ELECTRIC EELS and Paul Marotta from Clevo contemporaries the STYRENES. Apparently this group played around NYC in the mid-'90s, this CD is a mix of a few originals and rerecordings of numerous Cleveland mid '70s classics like "Cold Meat," "Agitated" and "Not Now No Way."



None of the rerecordings touches the scabrous feeling of the originals, which makes this CD rather less than useful. I would have welcomed an entire CD of new stuff. Oh well, all concerned have already done plenty in one lifetime, so maybe it's too much to ask. (RW)
(Smog Veil, 316 California Ave. #207, Reno, NV 89509, www.smogveil.com)

ANOMALATORS - "Paid to Party!" CD

High-calorie rock 'n' roll from these self-described "turbo nerds"—*Paid to Party* offers a hate ballad here ("I Really Hate You"), a DICTATORS cover there ("Science Gone Too Far"), a statement of simple statement of purpose in between ("Bastard Son of a Blistered Thumb"). Honest, hard-working and heavy-hitting stuff, this. (JH)
(TNC, PO Box 83, Freeland, MI 48623)

ANOTHER OPPRESSIVE SYSTEM - "Another Oppressive System" EP

Didn't really like their split with THREE WAY CUM too much, but this shit full on rages—you can tell that they've learned to play together and are starting to develop a sound that is a little more distinctly theirs. It still rips in the same school as STATE OF FEAR meets early HIATUS, but doesn't sound so copy cat as their earlier single. Good stuff. (MT)
($3.50 US, $5 world ppd: Skit, 142 Whiting Ln., West Hartford, CT 06119, skitrecords@hotmail.com)

THE ARTESIANS/WOODY CARR & THE EL CAMINOS - split 7"

Not much information with this split 7". Both '60s outfits turn in one song each. The ARTESIANS kick us off with Trick Bag, blasting straight in with a driving drumbeat mixed with a thumping organ which had me clean off my seat and doing the shoe-shin shuffle the length and breadth of *MRR*'s office. This totally does it for me—pure Northwest garage punk in the same vein as the SONICS and the WAILERS—fuck, this is right up there with "Out of Our Tree" and "Maintaining My Cool" as a garage punk classic. Next up, WOODY CARR & THE EL CAMINOS. With a great silky vocal style and brass section, this a bit more polished and poppier, which in no way is a bad thing. Still, comparisons to the SONICS are unavoidable—there's also a definite DEL SHANNON feel to this grooving number.Two unexpected garage gems, great pressing, made my day. (SD)
(Norton)

ARTIMUS PYLE - "The Absence of Life" EP

These six songs are possibly the last the Bay Area juggernaut known as ARTIMUS PYLE will record, as members are moving away to start new, and affordable, lives in the Midwest soon after the end of their current tour. They're a fucking good band. This is a fucking good record. If you already knew that, stop reading and go get it. If ya didn't, go see them play and get their records before it's to late as to avoid recounting some lame stories about it in ten years... (VH)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892)

ATTITYDPROBLEM - "Lost Trust" EP

This young Swedish punk band uses a good mixture of turbulent guitars, shouted vocals, and the fire of a new revolution. ATTITYDPROBLEM rails against the corrupt government and evil puppet politicians, greedy capitalists and their big business marketing techniques, and the star-struck media manipulating us through television, movies and magazines. When these guys play fast you get potent punk rock with a message. The lead off song "Lost Trust" and the song "Resist To Exist" stand out as shining punk examples. Recommended. (BR)
(Daniel Axelsson, Enbarsv. 6, 341 34 Ljungby, SWEDEN)

ATTITYDPROBLEM/SVINTASK - split EP

Looking to the cover for insight (seeing as I can't read Swedish), the snarling, mohawked punk rocker beating an unsuspecting old lady over the head leads me to think that this band does not give a fuck. Not clear-cut or fast enough to be called thrash, ATTITYPROBLEM bring a mid-paced, unrefined hardcore/punk approach that reminds me of something that should of come out on a *We Got Power* comp 20 years ago. SVINTASK's songs are more of the same straightforward and raw punk, but with growling vocals and a nasty distorted guitar. Both bands are good, but I think ATTITYDPROBLEM stands out. (CC)
(Daniel Axelsson, Klockaregardsgutan 70, 34135 Ljungby, SWEDEN, svintask@hotmail.com)

BAD DREAMS ALWAYS - Another Body Murdered" EP

Speedy hardcore from Sweden. Tight sound, screaming vocals. Three longhairs and one pompadour. What more could you ask for? (SR)
(Tommie Pettersson, Almvagen 29 D, 737 45 Fagersta, SWEDEN, www.pekwall@hotmail.com)

LES BATON ROUGE - "Women Non-Stop" CD

Even though this three-piece is from Lisbon Portugal, they seem to be able to totally capture the Riot Grrrl sound of the NEED, or COLD COLD HEARTS. I'm kind of skeptical about how this band is referencing the feminist movement in their music, it seems so marketable these days. (MM)
(Elevator Music, P.O. Box 1502 New Haven CT 06506, www.elevatormusic.com)

BETTER DEAD THAN RED - "The World Needs a Hero" CD

How come all right wing oi bands sound like SKREWDRIVER? Wait, I think the answer lies in the question. Much like the aforementioned dodgy band, this is exceptionally catchy street punk—that's the point—it's a recruiting tool that really looks like the it was put out by the US Army. This suspicion is strengthened further upon having a gander at the lyrics and the hokey lay-out glorifying the military. After a little further research on my part, it seems like these folx from South Carolina mix a little too well with the current white power scene—and while there's nothing directly racist on their album, they don't seem to have much of a problem having their releases sold through white power distros. You know, the sorts of places where you can pick up copies of SKREWDRIVER, MAX RESIST, and BRUTAL ATTACK albums along with Nazi flags and copies of *The Turner Diaries.* As the DICKS once said so brilliantly, "I hope you get drafted…I hope you're the first to die". Fuck this band. Fuck what they support. And fuck George Bush too (thrown in for good measure). (MT)
(Rock Against Communism)

BILLY CHILD - "Come on, Baby....." 10"

Jesus, the guy ain't dead yet and they're already naming bands after him. As you guessed, these three smartly-attired Japanese gentlemen wear their influences on their well-cuffed sleeves, turning in ten catchy-as-hell rock 'n' roll inspired garage numbers with a heavy MIGHTY CEASERS feel. Sung in Japanese with the odd English shout out, Toshi's nasally voice and crunchy production totally puts me in mind of SCARED OF CHAKA's more '60s inspired numbers. Two thumbs up and a smiley face for a great little 10 inch. Oh, extra points for being a garage band with ten songs and not one being a cover, now I'm off to watch the World Cup and hopefully spot your perfectly groomed mop tops in the crowd. (SD)
(Tear it Up, PO Box 7616, 5601 JP Eindhoven, NETHERLANDS, www.Tear-it-Up-Records.com)

THE BOILS/BRIGATE ROZZE - split EP

Mad Butcher Records has another strong split EP for you punks! This time you get the BOILS from Westchester, Pennsylvania, punking out with "Another Tragic Story," "Eyes Hit the Floor," and "Brick by Brick," backed with three good BRIGATE ROZZE songs. The BOILS have continue to not only survive, but to prevail through many line-up changes. This mght be the strongest incarnation yet! BRIGATE ROZZE play hard and fast on "Trust in Freedom, Trust in Fight," "A Choice," and "Giù la Maschera." The lyrics are intelligent, the message is urgent! Good punk rock spoken here! (BR)
(Mad Butcher, Bergfeld Str. 3, D-34289 Zierenberg, GERMANY, www.madbutcher.de)

BOMB POPS - "Every Thing Looks Like Her" EP

Wow. This is good. Two members of the DEVIL DOGS (Steve Baise and Mighty Joe Vincent) and a guy who sounds a bit like that other DEVIL DOG. DEVIL DOGS fans will not be disappointed. Not as hit-you-over-the-head-rock 'n' roll as the DEVIL DOGS, but just as catchy and fun. Fuck yeah. (BM)
(Rapid Pulse, PO Box 5075 Milford, CT 06460)

BORN DEAD - "24 Hostages" EP

So I leave the country for a month and return as a peace punk? What's that all about, Tom? This here is pretty awesome political hardcore of the peace-loving variety with CRASS-style packaging, dueling vocals, and music that can inspire a mosh pit in any crowd. I especially love the George W. as Hitler poster. (DP)
(1221 28th St., Oakland, CA 94608)

BRIGATE ROZZE/LOS ACTIVOS - split EP

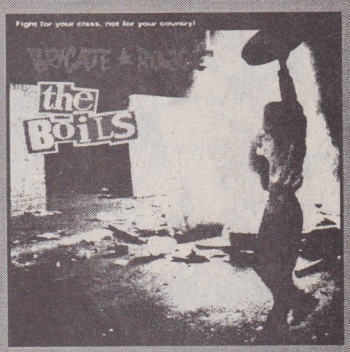
It's always nice when two bands with totally different musical styles do a split. It makes it seem more like they're actually friends instead of just doing it because they're styles are really similar. BRIGATE ROZZE start off with a thrashy type of song, and work their way into more melodic stuff, without sacrificing any of the speed or passion. The lyrics were mostly in Italian (I think), so I'm not sure what's gotten them so pissed off, but it works. LOS ACTIVOS play pop-punk along the lines of the QUEERS, complete with songs about zombies and fried brains. Not exceptional, but good enough to hold your attention. (MX)
(Nicotine, no address)

JOHNNY BURNETTE & THE ROCK 'N' ROLL TRIO - "Tear it Up/ Oh Baby Babe"

Two tunes recorded live in 1956. It's amazing that no matter how many times I've heard a band cover "Tear It Up," nothing approaches the original. These guys simply rock. The band lets loose and the girls scream their heads off. "Oh Baby Babe" makes the case that ELVIS became the King simply because he was in the right place at the right time. Johnny has the snarl and his deep, lustful voice makes this song sound downright dirty. (CK)
(Norton, Box 646, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276, nortonrec@aol.com)

CATHETER - "Preamble to Oblivion" LP

CATHETER who are from Colorado, tear through song after song of crusty stenchcore. Their music reminded me of EXTREME NOISE TERROR with some blast beats thrown in here



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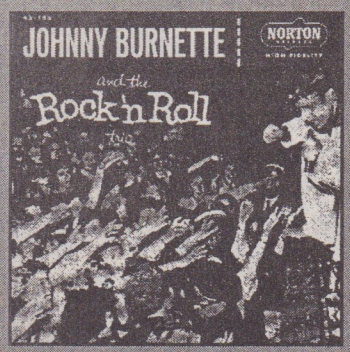

and there. Not surprisingly, their lyrics have a depressing, doomed outlook. And the cover art on this release is so overwhelmingly weird and bright I felt I should be on hallucinogens to truly appreciate it. Overall, a quality release from... (RC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Avenue, Cotati, CA 94931)

CHAMPION - "Count Our Numbers" CD

I'll be honest—I wasn't looking forward to listening to this, as their last record was kind of a disappointment—the rocking level was moderate and when combined with the cheesy straight-edge lyrical attack—it just made me go ho-hum. But this—holy fuck! Powerful and crushing hardcore that combines the urgency of CHAIN OF STRENGTH with all the modern elements that made that first AMERICAN NIGHTMARE EP required listening. Great ALONE IN THE CROWD cover too. Fuck me, this is so fucking great! (MT)
(Bridge Nine, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, www.bridge9.com)

CRIPPLE BASTARDS/REGURGITATE - split EP

CRIPPLE BASTARDS rip through a whirlwind of songs hammering out their patented mincecore. REGURGITATE who are from Sweden slay the listener with their own brand of fast and bloody grindcore. This band makes a hell of a lot of noise for a three piece. And in the end I was left wondering when was the last time I was "smeared with bloodmixed semen." Uh.... (RC)
(no address)

CRUCIAL UNIT - "Moshzilla" EP

CRUCIAL UNIT is the "Crucial" band that got lost in the mix for me. That said, this band is really funny. I might call them "Party Thrash" because although they play thrash-grind-punk whatever with much skill, there is a kind of air of balloons and confetti that goes along with the music. I have never seen this band live, but I imagine it being a lot like a YOUR MOTHER show or a SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD show. CRUCIAL UNIT throws in chant parts and unexpected, but really cool breakdowns into their songs. Besides that, the lyrics were what really captured me on this record. They're really fucking funny. There's a song which is an assault on crappy 'zines (much needed), a song which condemns Columbus Fest for being an insult to Native Americans, and my favorite, the "Blatantly Obvious Political Song." This shit is so funny, I swear. I haven't laughed this good since the last issue of *A Punk Kid Walks Into a Bar.* (WR)
(De La Mente, PO Box 7183, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

CUT THROAT HOODS - "Eve of Chaos" EP

This band is just so god damn cuddly. Hailing from Minneapolis the CUT THROAT HOODS have skulls and punk rock skeletons everywhere. Any punx worth their weight in cheap swill knows that a good punk skull is like a teddy bear to a toddler. If skulls aren't enough than the use of "rat" and "cage" in the same sentence surely will. Musically this isn't really anything special punky hardcore that has a nice drunk yet politcally-charged feel. If you don't feel like just giving these guys you're best drunken hug, than cash in all your punk points now. (JF)
(c/o Pete and Luke, 5532 29th Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55417)

CWILL - "Nations" 10"

Dark and brooding hardcore from Switzerland. Vocals strained and torn as though ripped to shreds by razors combined with HIATUS-esque guitars. Sweeping and melodic like DRIFT, bone crushing and driving like the INEGRITY's *Humanity Is The Devil* ten inch. Solid and worthy of heavy rotation. (MT)
(Prawda, Scholastikastr. 24, CH-9400 Rorschach, SWITZERLAND)

JEFF DAHL - "I Was a Teenage Glam-Fag" CD

These are covers of old "Glam" songs by SLADE, CHERRY VANILLA, BERLIN BRATS, SWEET, LOU REED, T-REX, RUNAWAYS, SMOKEY NYC/LA, COCKNEY REBEL, and LITTLE RICHARD. Its cool to hear this rock 'n' roll but if I was going to listen to this stuff, I would much rather listen to the originals. I'm not overly impressed by these covers. (SR)
(UU, PO Bok 1867, CVCRK, AZ 85331)

DAMNED - "New Rose/Help"

A picture disc of the early DAMNED single. If you consider yourself a punk rocker, I certainly hope you have these songs in one form or another. Therefore this is mostly for the completist or collector crowd. Classic, yet pretty unnecessary at this point. (RL)
(Munster)

DED BUGS - "Planet of Blood" CD

Poppy fun punk rock about monster movies and silly stuff. Not unlike the GROOVIE GHOULIES, but not sounding much like them at all. Produced by that clever Mass Giorgini, this is a fun-filled jolly good time. Nothing terribly original, but a whole lot of fun and catchy as hell. Just when I give up on pop punk, bands like this make me remember why I loved it in the first place. Hats off to you guys. (BM)
(318, Stewart, DeSoto, MO 63020, www.dedbugs.com)

DEL-GATORS - "Pound Down!" LP

My guitar player has been trying to get me to listen to this band all month, and like everything else he suggests, I just ignored it. These cats ain't half band. Fun, trashy rock and roll featuring ex and current members of the SPACE SHITS, SEXAREENOS, and SCAT RAG BOOSTERS. This doesn't stray too far away from their other bands, although it does lack the energy and franticness. It sounds like they are holding back, afraid to get too gone. I think they would be awesome live after a few drinks. (BM)
(Voodoo Rhythm, Jurastrasse 15, 3013 Bern, SWITZERLAND, info@voodoorhythm.com)

DISCARGA VIOLENTA - "Sem Paz, Sem Descanso—Uma Discografia Punk" LP

LÄRM worshippers take note, cause this Brazilian anarcho-punk thrash machine is right up your alley. Hectic and frenzied much in the same manner as the aforementioned Dutch gentlemen but also well schooled in the ways of the likes of OLHO SECO or COLERA. Brazil has a long and fine history of producing out of control hardcore and DISCARGA VIOLENTA fits into that history quite well. Not for the meek, as this discography contains 72 tracks to melt your brain. (MT)
(Absurd, Cx. Postal 302, Osasco/SP, 06001-970, Brazil)

DISSENT - "Sick Society" EP

Not the old US band with the same name, but hardcore kids from Canada. Full on metallic thick-neck straight edge hardcore with a definite New York influence. Five tracks, one of which is a DEATH SENTENCE cover. (TB)
(Badman, Martin Cesky Nebrehovice 7, 386 01 Strakonice, CZECH REPUBLIC)

DSB - "Radical Sharp Shot" EP

Inventive, fucked up, and noisy peace punk from Japan. The long, unusually structured songs caught my attention, but also lost it relatively quickly by not quite breaking into the rock. As the record kept spinning, monotone vocals contributed to the assault of only somewhat intriguing mediocrity. (AC)
(Eiji, Madoka-Sou 201, 461-2 Kogasaka, Machida-shi, Tokyo, JAPAN, 194-0014)

THE ENDS - "Jump Ship/Sick Little Eyes"

Friendly punk that can't hurt anybody. Tuneful '70s punk style, good songs that are somewhere between a BUZZCOCKS and a NERVES kind of feel. Real catchy record, I bet you'll like it, maybe even want to make out with it. Can't have mine—it already has my cooties. PS: Sending your reviewer a copy shows extreme class. (RY)
(Mortville, PO Box 4263, Austin, TX 78765, www.mortvillerecords.com)

ERADICATE/SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. - split LP

Well, I think everyone knows who I am going to pick as winner. SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. rule! It's about time I got 12 songs on a single side of vinyl to listen to. So much easier than having to wait for the next seven inch to plop down on the turntable and start playing. More of their amazing trashed-out rock and roll. I knew there had to be more recordings to be released even if they did call it quits. Get every one of them to me immediately. ERADICATE are a grindcore band complete with cookie monster vocals. This is the point when another *MRR* shitworker will usually walk by and say, "I never knew you listened to this type of stuff." Unfortunately, no one is here. ERADICATE only produce 11 songs and are declared the loser. Too bad. (CK)
(Manuel Wastl, Der Chef, Postfach 5027, 26040 Oldenburg, GERMANY, triofanclub@yahoo.de)

EXTERMINATE - CDEP

Future Japanese scientists clone *Short Sharp Shock*-era CHAOS U.K. from puke cell found on ancient studded leather jacket. There's heavy South American/ Scandinavian influences too, this is pretty rowdy stuff. There's a guy on the Japanese national soccer team with a red mohawk (honest) I wonder if he's a big fan of EXTERMINATE... (AD)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamaigu Maizuru Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

EXTREME NOISE TERROR - "Punker Than Punk" EP

Wow, I didn't realize these guys were still going. Here they cover songs by SHAM 69, THE KILLJOYS, COCKNEY REJECTS, and DISCHARGE in their own guttural style. Actually, the songs are probably as close to the originals as they could manage to get to 'em—if you are expecting to hear ENT's signature wall of thrash you might be disappointed. I'm not sure what the point of this record is, except that it's a bit of fun, and that's good enough for me. (AM)
(no address)

FACE DOWN IN SHIT - "Doused Spirits" EP

This is dark heavy-handed hardcore that ranges from a slow to mid-tempo pace.There are a few times during this release that they kick the speed up, but it isn't very often. It is hard to place their influences. Maybe a touch of BUZZOVEN, mixed in with a tad of CATHARSIS if they played slow all the time. Thick production and growling vocals complement the tunes very well, but in all honesty, it ended up dragging a bit towards the end. But don't kid yourself this is not bad by any stretch of the imagination. For those who are interested it appears that this release is also

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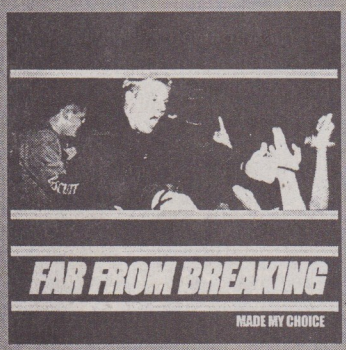


on CD with a few extra tracks including their side of the 10" split with COLD ELECTRIC FIRE. (RC)
(Face Down In The Shit, PO Box 06146, GSO, NC 27403)

FAR FROM BREAKING - "Made My Choice" EP

Man, I ate this shit up when I was sixteen. Block letter font, finger-pointing, crew cuts, New Balance sneakers—wait a minute...where is the kid with the BOLD shirt? Did these guys miss something? You can't have a layout like this without a kid in a BOLD shirt. No wait...here he is in the insert. Whew. Don't get me wrong, FAR FROM BREAKING are far from sucking. Thankfully the music isn't as boring as the layout. Fans of CARRY ON's earlier stuff will dig this. Youth crew straight edge hardcore that is well executed with back-up vocals in all the right places. Good stuff, but it's really hard for me to get over the layout. (CC)
(Third Party, 21 Nancy Ln, Amherst, NY 14228)

FAR LEFT LIMIT/DEADSTARE - split EP

A split record from two Australian bands. No koala nonsense here. FAR LEFT LIMIT play five songs of solid American-style hardcore. Lyrically a cut above most, w/songs about local politics and interesting takes on subjects like consumerism. But it makes me think... if only we could get the vegan militias of the world to enforce a moratorium on the words "pride," "honor," and "loyalty" in hardcore songs, FAR LEFT LIMIT and all of the rest of us would be so much better off! On the flip side of the record we jump to a darker side of things with DEADSTARE. You won't catch me complaining about the use of blast beats, but the mandatory grindcore use of crisp guitar sound, double kick drums, a vocal range like that of mating calls I hear on the discovery channel, are things I just can't deal with... if those are sounds you can handle, DEADSTARE pull it together nicely. (VH)
(Gash, PO Box 236, Blackburn 3130, Victoria, AUSTRALIA., deadstarforlife@hotmail.com)

LOS FASTIDIOS - "Radio Boots" EP

This great punk band from Italy has been playing first-rate street music for more than ten years. The songs have vibrant energy, strong vocals, searing guitar work, and punk hooks galore. The title cut, "Radio Boots," will have you tapping your boot and reaching for another beer. The lyrics to "No Leaders" and "One Day You'll Understand" illustrate that these veteran punks have a complete grasp of what's facing young working-class people around the world today. This is a very good record! Order yours as soon as possible! (BR)
(KOB, via Nicola Mazza 65/B, 37129 Verona, ITALY, kob@bbk.org)

FEEDERZ - "Teachers in Space" CD

Always thought of this second LP from the FEEDERZ (1984) as markedly inferior to the debut disc (which I never owned except on tape, like most people) but time has been kind. While everyone was increasing the blender speed from chop to liquefy, the always-contrarian Frank Discussion maintained an obsessive interest in his morbidly effective lyrics, which are still great. The music sounds better now as well. Short disc but worth it. (RW)
(Broken Rekids, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146)

FEEDERZ - "Ever Feel Like Killing Your Boss?" CD

Oof. Not sure how to approach this CD (with rubber gloves, maybe) now that it's earned saintly status among wiseacre punk rock record collectiors—ah, hell. The original release of the FEEDERZ' LP was an instant novelty by virtue of its packaging (a square of sandpaper glued to the front cover, which rates above the zipper on *Sticky Fingers* and beneath the rubber vomit on the *You'll Hate This Record* compilation), its neurotic hardcore stylings, and hateful lyrical sentiments. The rumpus kicks off with a not-mellow cover of Olivia Newton John's "Have You Ever Been Mellow" and winds painfully through "Imitation of Life," "Bionic Girl," "Terrorist," "Gut Rage," and "Destruction Unit." Vocalist/guitarist Frank Discussion spits out his words and hurls invectives at the listener; the band lurches and reels, and 15 year-old kids get exposed to do-it-yourself nihilism and situationist paste-ups. The FEEDERZ were an uncomfortable fit in the let's-feel-good-about-the-scene 1980s, but are perfect listening for our own troubled decade. Good to have *Ever Feel Like Killing Your Boss* available at a time when unfamiliar listeners so desperately need to hear sounds meant to grate. Note that the CD cover features a sandpaper applique, in homage to the original. (JH)
(Broken Rekids, PO Box, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.brokenrekids.com)

F-HOLE - "I Need a Drink" EP

Wow. The first few chords are a total rip-off of an old SOCIAL UNREST song, then it breaks into this (almost) IMPATIENT YOUTH type, (almost) twangy thing. Here's another thing—have these guys been listening to old records from the EMBARRASSMENT? I like this. And they're from right here in Frisco. Then they go and throw some female vocals at me. You fuckers, you know I'm a sucker for a chick on the mic. I like it. I like that it's catchy. I like that it's (almost) twangy. Mostly I like that it sounds just a little bit different. On blue vinyl and it looks like it's limited to 300 copies. (KK)
($5 ppd: Your Permanent c/o F-Hole, 1393 Grove St, San Francisco, CA 94117)

FORCA MACABRA - "Nos Tumulos Abertos" LP

Forget all of that horse shit that's pumped into our ears about the internet bringing the world closer together. Here is the real fucking deal. FORCA MACABRA—a Finnish band singing in Portuguese to emulate their favorite bands from Brazil. This particular record is a repress of their thirteen-song LP on Genet, and is very much in the vein of ARAGEDOM. Their EPs, one of which was recently repressed, have less of the dirty, gloomy, bass sound, making them much more akin to RATOS DE PORAO or COLERA. I like the EPs more than this, but decide for yourself. Now available for American consumption... (VH)
(Thrash Brigade, Pekantie 26, 58500 Punkaharji, FINLAND)

FORCA MACABRA - "Forca Sinistra" 7" Flexi

FORCA MACABRA seem like a South American anarchopunk band. The look of their product is typical of that region, and their lyrics are in Portuguese. The A side of this record would not disabuse me of that notion. The B side is spoken word in English, and it is obvious that this band is Scandinavian. From Finland. This flexidisc is limited to 1000 copies. (DP)
(no address)

FORCA MACABRA - "Mues Olhos So Veem Dor..." EP

Not since the World Cup has their been a greater display of world unity, than this new EP from Finland's FORCA MACABRA. Here we have a Finnish band, on a Japanese label, doing their own styling homage to Brazilian hardcore. Is it good you may ask, well if you like FORCA MACABRA's other releases, you'll like this. I happen to think they are pretty good. (JF)
(Overthrow, Maruta-Palace #402, 21-5 Shimo-Shinshuku, Ichikawa, Chiba 272-01, JAPAN)

FORCED TO DECAY - "Aufprall" CD

Dark brutal metal/hardcore that is has a lot of power and anger driving it. They occasionally switch gears and slide into some calmer melodic stuff. But that doesn't happen very often and they just keep this wall of crushing noise coming your way. The music is constantly surging and biting, and they switch the tempos around enough to keep it interesting. I remember listening to one of their older releases a long time ago and not being very impressed. But this is a damn solid release and well worth a listen if you are into crushing bands from Germany that play the new breed of hardcore music. (RC)
(Per Koro, PO Box 102514, D-28025, Bremen, GERMANY, www.perkoro.de)

THE 4-SQUARES - "Steve's Hamper" CD

The 4-SQUARES play straightforward punk with a melodic edge. They have a very beefy sound, which in a lot of ways reminds me of DILLINGER FOUR, but without most of the hooks. The 4-SQUARES album is heavier and more rockin'. In a lot of ways it reminds me of LOPEZ, because of how tight everything is. Unfortunately, there are no lyrics in here, which is disappointing. But I have the feeling these dudes would be really good live. Check them out if you have the chance. (WR)
(Quincy Shanks, PO Box 3035, St. Charles, IL 60174, www.quincyshanks.com)

FRONTSIDE/*TOM SAWYER - split CD

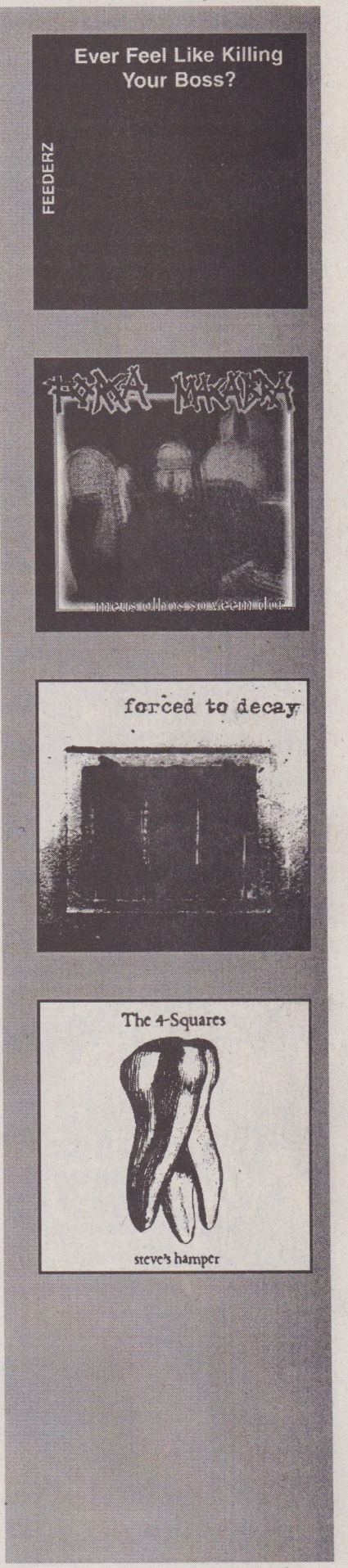
FRONTSIDE play metallic hardcore that reminds me of STRUGGLE or CHOKEHOLD, both lyrically and musically. Hell, the singer even sounds like fucking Dylan from STRUGGLE. Too bad this came out ten years too late, or else they'd be huge. Somewhere, though, an army of kids with baggy pants, tribal tattoos, and visors await... *TOM SAWYER, on the other hand, would love to go on tour opening up for the GET UP KIDS or JIMMY EAT WORLD. I would rather hit myself in the face with a brick over and over for an hour than do that, but that's just me. Really well done, accessible, pop punk which sort of drive me crazy because it's *so* clean, produced and sounds nothing like the first LEATHERFACE record. They remind me of a not-quite-as-good ALGEBRA ONE, who in turn reminded me of a not-quite-as-good JAWBREAKER. (MT)
(Sinister, PO Box 1178, Lagrange Park, IL 60526)

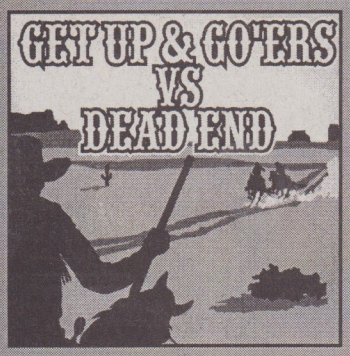
THE FUSES - "Sodium Pentathol Negative" EP

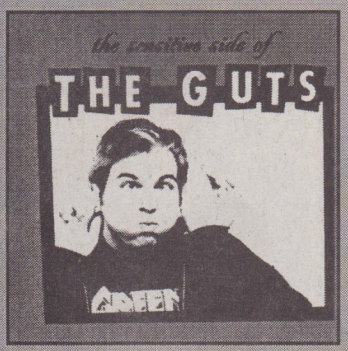
This band sounds like SATISFACT. That isn't really a good thing. Are these emo boys trying to do new wave? Not a good thing. It has a gimmicky playable cover, which really doesn't play at all. That really isn't a good thing. The lyrics are worse than the art on the cover. That really isn't a good thing. This record is not good. It really isn't. (DT)
(Slamdance Cosmopolis, www.slamdancecosmopolis.com)

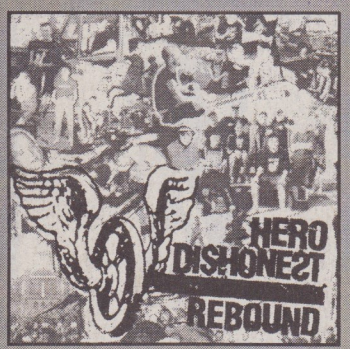
GET UP & GO'ERS/DEAD END - split EP

What we have here is two Swedish bands that listen to a great deal of the prototypical Jade Tree style of "hardcore." "Hardcore," if you mean overproduced music that licks balls. I guess if you like over-hyped melodic hardcore that tips its hat to the likes of LIFETIME or KID DYNAMITE, then this might be your thing. DEAD END comes out the winner of this split if I had to choose, but thankfully I don't. (CC)
(Bridge, PO Box 1903, 581 18 Linkoping, SWEDEN)









THE GOSSIP - "Arkansas Heat" 10"

This band is sassy beyond belief—they know how to rock out like no other. With only drums, vocals, and guitar, every element is more important, and this three-piece knows how to keep it sweet and simple. It's not often these days that a record comes out that is this danceable. This release continues with the same energy that made their first release, *That's Not What I Heard,* so unbelievable. The risks they took with their song structure, especially with the song "Revolution," are a good sign. I don't think anyone in this band is really concerned with impressive guitar solos, just the rock. (MM)
(Kill Rock Stars, PMB 418, 120 NE State, Olympia, WA 98501)

GUTS - "The Sensitive Side of..." CD

What a bunch of wasted potential. I mean, the first two songs are about smoking blunts, for christ's sake! I had such high (huh huh...dude) expectations that this band would actually turn out to be amusing, but instead they squandered the rest of their record singing about love and other unimportant shit. Less love, more blunts, please. Musically, this is silly pop-punk that's been done over and over, but you probably already knew that. (MX)
(Guts, PO Box 543 Portsmouth, NH 03802)

HACKSAW - "Wasted Summer Blues/Lonely Lines"

High energy rock-n-roll gets your head bobbin' on both tunes. They're somewhere between BTO and GLUCIFER. Did I mention the pretty pink vinyl? Rockin! (HM)
($4 ppd: Broken Glass, 1688 Fairway Dr, Jamison, PA 18929, www.hacksaw.ca, www.brokenglassrecords.com)

HALF MY TIME - "On Reflections" CD

Stereotypical melodic youth crew stuff here from this Italian band. It's tight and produced well, but as you would expect from any band in this genre these days, incredibly derivative. At times this reminded me of really early LIFETIME mixed with the pace and melody of BY THE GRACE OF GOD or something similar. What disappoints me the most is the fact that the vocals carry almost no weight, just the sort of talk-talk-shout-shout style that bores me to death. (SP)
(Youth Crew, youth_crew99@hotmail.com)

HELLRIDE - "Troublemaker + 2" CD

From Norway in 1999, so as you might be guessing—it's over the top, heavy rock a la TURBONEGRO, or the American Empty and Scooch Pooch counterparts. But TURBONEGRO they ain't. Oh, it's tougher than leather, and they grunt and pose no doubt, but it's missing the whacked-out comical element—the best part. Serious rock for serious rockers. (RY)
(Scooch Pooch, 5850 W. 3rd St #209, Los Angeles, CA 90036)

HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE - "Directed by Alan Smithee" 10"

I love this band, with their crazy high energy distorted garage. Imagine if the RIP OFFS were a hardcore band. No bullshit, in-your-face mayhem. This has the band's first 7" and a bunch of other tracks for your listening pleasure. With songs like "Fuck Jesus, Jesus Fuck" and my favorite, "England That's a Place to Hate," you just can't go wrong. (TB)
(Kenrock, Fabriksgatan 39B, 412 51 Gothenburg, SWEDEN)

HERO DISHONEST/REBOUND - split EP

These two bands could be LIFETIME/KID DYNAMITE clones if they wanted to be. Yup stuck somewhere in between the sounds of the two bands is where both HERO DISHONEST and REBOUND lie. No new ground is broken with these here songs, you have melodic parts and finger pointing parts. Hell you might be able to bounce and windmill to the songs. By they way I like KID DYNAMITE and LIFETIME and I like this EP. (JF)
(Combat Rock Industry, PO Box 65 11101, Riihimaki, FINLAND, www.combatrockindustry.com)

HIGH HOPES/ ! - split EP

I had high hopes about HIGH HOPES until the vocals kicked in. They play fast melodic hardcore that is well instrumented but with really whiny and annoying vocals. It's interesting that HIGH HOPES thanks a dodgy bunch of hooligans called the Knuckleheads when their SAVES THE DAY-influenced rock sounds like they should be thanking their fanclub filled with 14 year-old girls. Anyway, on the flipside we get ! from Germany, who are a harder, more fuller style of fast hardcore band. But when compared to the other side of the record, who isn't? (CC)
(Broken Bones, Lauenburger Str. 950, 21493 Schwarzenbeck, GERMANY)

HIRETSUKAN - "Invasive/Exotic" CD

Surging "emotional" (uh...emo) hardcore with a lot of choppy rhythms and the occasional burst of speed. The female vocalist has a really harsh scream that compliments the buzzing abrasive music well. I generally don't go for this type of music, but this release hit me just right and I ended up really liking it. The verdict is still out on their valiant attempt in covering "Creeping Death" by METALLICA. Any time a band tries to cover METALLICA or SLAYER they just end up falling short. But you already knew that, right? (RC)
(G7 Welcoming Committee, PO Box 27006, 360 Main St. Concourse, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4T3, CANADA, www.g7welcomingcommittee.com)

HORE HOUNDS - "No Time for You" EP

Basic 4/4 rock in the time-tested and mother-approved NEW YORK DOLLS/HEARTBREAKERS vein—or even ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, if I you wanna get personal. "Oh Yeah," on the flip, is a little faster and grabbier than the a-side offerings, and more my kettle of fish. The HORE HOUNDS are here for you if you're needin' 'em. (JH)
(Rapid Pulse, PO Box 5075, Milford, CT 06460)

HOT HOT HEAT - "Keep My Name out of Your Mouth" EP

Get a PHANTOM LIMBS record. They do this sort of thing much better. (DT)
(Monoton, www.monotonstudioatgmx.de)

HTML - "The Monkey Part of the Job" CD

A cacaphony of noise and screaming which brings back memories of the mid-'90s emo scene. This sort of has the feel of a screamo version of early CHUMBAWAMBA. Eclectic, political, and angry. At times it lacks in its execution, and to be honest might had been better as a demo. Politically I'm down, but musically it doesn't really do much for me. (MT)
(c/o Mike Q. Roth, PO Box 8131, Pittsburgh, PA 15217)

HUL- "Den Danske Ungdom" LP

Pull out the spikes and studs, boys and girls, because here you got some scrappy Danish kids doing a very DISCHARGE-y styled punk rock. With lots of speed and fury, the HUL wage an angst-ridden adolescent revolt against parents and school entirely in Danish. Whoo hoo.(DL)
(9Lives, www.9livesrecords.dk)

HUL- "Den Danske Ungdom" LP

DISCHARGE? Not really I'd say. HUL rides a tasteful balance between the hectic urgency first displayed in the likes of early NEGAZIONE with the overt sweeping rocking melody of ASTA KASK. It sort of reminds me of those Finnish blasters ÄPÄRÄT, but not quite as heavy. Absolutely fucking brilliant stuff here. (MT)
(9Lives, www.9livesrecords.dk)

THE IGNITERS/THE VINCENTS - split EP

Hmmm...well it's painfully evident that the IGNITERS have invested in some MARC BOLAN records. The first track here is super T-REX-sexy, and has an air of trying too hard. Then the follow-up gets all LED ZEPPLIN-y on you. I really wish this came with a clear band photo, because I'd bet money that the lead singer of this band has some girly scarf wrapped around his neck. Need I say more? Partners in crime the VINCENTS push their heavy brand o' grunge rock. Personally, I don't have any patience for this stoner shit. (DL)
(Diaphragm, PO Box 10388 Columbus, OH 43201)

I HATE YOU - "1995/1998" CD

I HATE YOU were one of the most vicious straightedge bands of all time. Scathing and violent commentary on sellouts, drunks, and those lame-ass youth crew chumps. Blasting, vicious hardcore that reminds me of PROJECT X or FINAL EXIT. Only real complaint is the lack of a lyric sheet—but it makes sense since most of them have broken their respective edges at this point and are probably embarrassed of lyrics like "...will you leave this room alive, doubt it fucker let's see you try, friends and I will break your hands, never fucking smoke again." Drummer went on to do time in DAMAGE, AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, and KNIVES OUT. "I'll cut you with my edge..." (MT)
(Deathwish, 432 Morris Ave, Providence, RI 02906, www.deathwishinc.com)

INEPSY - "See You In Hell" EP

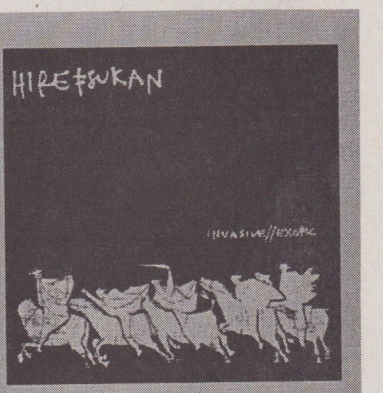
The classic studs and spikes combo of MOTORHEAD and DISCHARGE comes through again for these Canadian punx. Well done, but lacking in the hooks and total steamroller feel that makes a band like BORN DEAD ICONS utilization of this formula so potent. (MT)
(Ineptik)

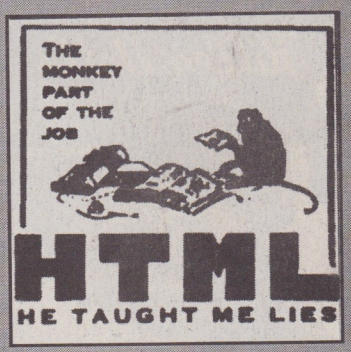
IN THE CLEAR - "Leave the City in Flames" CD

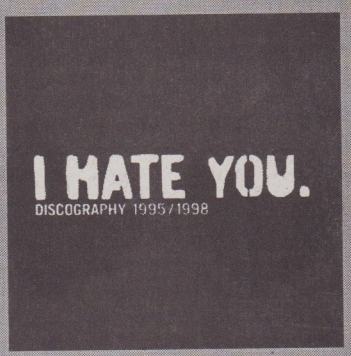
This is great straightedge hardcore from the UK. Everything is here for a typical yet solid XXX release. From the fast, buzzing guitars to the back-up shouts, IN THE CLEAR will keep you doing finger points at the ceiling while you listen to this record. Apparently they have broken up, so this will be their final release as a band.Worth checking out if your are into bands from labels like Crucial Response. (RC)
(Zandor, 145-149 Cardigan Rd, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK, zadorxxx@hotmail.com)

INSULT TO INJURY – "Realm of Indifference" CD

These guys look tough. They are big men with bad tattoos. They sing about brass knuckles and taking no shit. All of this accompanied by a chugga chugga beat. If they were on my softball team they could probably hit the ball a long way. My team needs power hitters—the world doesn't need another bad, macho, hardcore band. So come play softball, boys. (JF)
(NGS, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL 60559)







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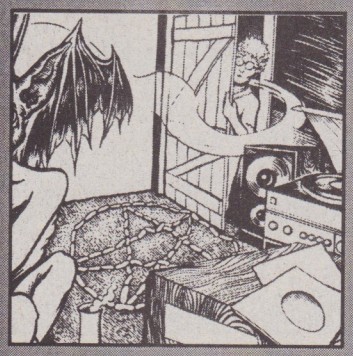
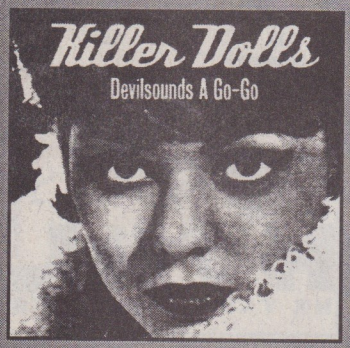




IRON SAUSAGE - "I Toke and I Vote" EP

IRON SAUSAGE who are from Australia not only have come up with a great band name but the record title is funny as well. The band hammers through some turbulent grindcore with deep guttural vocals. A blazing fast tempo lunges for the eardrums and will not let go. This is a quality "all go and no slow" release. Check it out and join the "Church of Sausagology." (RC)
(Deplorable)

JED WHITEY - "Mongoloid Cage Match" LP

More Aussies for me to love. Though just a tad on the slick side, these guys get hard rock crazy with major guitar riffing and an all-cocks-out attitude. They're not to the too-good HELLACOPTERS stage yet, but I fear they're headed that way. It's an ear pleaser. Let's get our asses to Australia, already. (RY)
(Out Of The Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill 6939, AUSTRALIA, www.outoftheloop.com.au)

THE JERRY SPIDER GANG - "When I Get Off/Situation 3"

Slow, monotonous, pounding rock and roll with more guitar solos than I can shake a stick at. Can I hear a little wah-wah? Thanks. I think the singer is the lost member of AC/DC, or maybe he spent a lot of time in Sweden. I like his deep sound drowning in plenty of reverb. I wouldn't mind talking to him the phone. The DMZ cover is pretty cool. How could you go wrong? "Situation 3" goes somewhere else, and I'd rather stay home. (CK)
(Ghostrider, BP 68, 75961 Paris Cedex 20, France, lo.spider@club-internet.fr)

THE JEWWS - "l'explosion du son de maintenant!" LP

.....lord help me, these here JEWWS make me wanna suck my own cock.....and maybe eat out my own asshole....with passion!!!! Now this record is what good garage music is s'posed to sound like.....for many years now quality garage has gone on the back burner and it's fan base either got into the AC/DC fad or spread their legs far apart to receive the noisy college-boy swamp rock offered by labels like IN THE RED and such..... finally.....some good ol' fashion *garage*...with hooks and style.... and they sound so young.....mmmmmmmmm, yum yum..... they're from Texas ta boot....and that just goes to show you folks, cuz about ten years ago Texas had a *great* garage rock scene.....so these JEWWS are coming from a fine background.....my only beef is the cover art...all bands should take note and *never* allow the record label's "in-house" graphic-arts dude to design their record sleeve, cuz this is what you wind up with....*generic*!!!!!! Remember, the sleeve is just as important as the *music*!!!!! Next time I wanna see a nice shot of the band wearing something smart....especially the bass player...she better be lookin' fine for the next cover, yes-sir-ee!!! I wanna product that'll make me so over the top horny....horny enough to eat the corn outta shit.....!!!!!! Still, the JEWWS are at the top of my list for this kinda action....maybe they'll play Frisco soon so we all can see how good they are in bed.... (SW)
(Demolition Derby, PB 4005, 2800 Mechelen 4, BELGIUM, www.ping.be)

KANSALAISTOTTELEMATTOMUUS - "Fuck Their Fuckin' System" EP

Whoa! What is this? Looks like Deek from OI POLLOI has moved to Finland and started a new band! This follows very much in the same path as his old band; critical political lyrics, bouncy sing-a-long music—but in a that is way heavier. Imagine, perhaps, WOLFBRIGADE doing OI POLLOI covers and you get some sort of idea what I'm talking about. I think it's fucking great. (MT)
(Kämäset Levyt, Mechelininkatu 24 B 30, 00100 Helsinki, FINLAND)

KILLER DOLLS - "Devilsounds A Go-Go" CD

Argentinean rock and roll that has a sound to it like the SUPERSUCKERS with a little rockabilly mixed in. Trying to get that sound that the Scandinavians seem to have perfected, but pales in comparison. It is a decent effort, but is just missing something to set it apart from the pack. (DP)
(No Fun, CC 1909, C 1000 WAT, Buenas Aires, ARGENTINA)

KILL THE HIPPIES - "Spasms In the New Age" CD

Ah, who needs the BRIEFS or the EPOXIES when you have these guys? Way better production across the board, intelligent lyrics that don't wallow in nostalgia for a scene that never really existed, this is really good early-80s style punk that rarely misses, even with their taking 25 jabs to your midsection. Boy-girl tradeoff on the vox really works as well. A logical continuation of the sound on their excellent singles. Anyone who digs the first *Rodney on the ROQ* LP will dig this'n. (RW)
(c/o Kill the Hippies, 614 1/2 N. Matua, Ken OH 44240)

KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND - "Jesus Loves My One Man Band" LP

And so do I. King Louie has an amazing voice even when he's screaming into a cheap microphone. I could listen to it all day. Rave up blues with the road on the mind: "Headin' for the Big City Lights," "Pumpin' Propane," and "A Hitchhiker's Souvenir," not to mention some things that stink: cabbage and feet. I demand more one (wo)man bands and I'll be doing the porkchop all the way home. (CK)
(Kryptonite, 2324 W. Wisconsin Ave. #53, Milwaukee, WI 53233)

KNIVES OUT - "Heartburn" CD

Musically this has that modern choppy East Coast hardcore thing written all over it—thick guitars, rythmic drumming, and vocals that somewhat remind me of early DIE KREUZEN mixed with that infamous NYHC bark. The artwork, combined with the lyrics to some of the songs, puts forth this creepy, "we just broke up and this is how I'm going to stalk/fuck with you," vengeance vibe to them that seems to be all the rage for hardcore boys these days. Sorry, but I'm tired of that crap—get over it. (MT)
(Deathwish, 432 Morris Ave, Providence, RI 02906, www.deathwishinc.com)

KOOPAS - "When Opposites Attack" EP

Total SCREECHING WEASEL appreciation here. Decent mid- tempo pop punk from Texas. This band needs to play faster. It's just way to damn slow for me. Mutant Poppers and "true believers" take note, this is up your alley. Shit, they even reference Mutant Pop and several MP bands—songs about girls, heartbreak: "think I'm going to puke," used, and he's just got to make up his mind on the third song! Does he want to be just friends? More than friends? Now they are dating? Now they are breaking up and he wants her back? What the fuck? Make up your damn mind! Good effort, but it lacks intensity, and originality (but that goes without saying in pop punk). (BM)
(Top Five, PO Box 1924 Silsbee, TX 77656, thekoopas@juno.com)

LEFT ALONE - "Wilmington CA" CD

Wow, these guys sound a lot like RANCID, right down to the damned reggae. I was intrigued by the first song, but probably because the lyrics were in Spanish and I couldn't understand them. Once I got to the songs that are in English, I discovered that they're pretty fucking generic. They cover "Panic" by the SMITHS, but in that ME FIRST & THE GIMME GIMMES way where you're supposed to laugh at how fast the songs are since they're being played by a "punk rock band." My dad would call it "punking it up." I would call it totally unnecessary. (MX)
(One Shot, 8339 Alburtis Ave, Whittier, CA 90606, www.oneshotrecords.net)

LESSER OF TWO - "Transmutation" EP

LESSER OF TWO crank through three songs of gloomy mid-tempo grind that are full of turmoil and angst. The music goes through some turbulent time changes while the guitar and bass player both pitch in on vocals. This is a D.I.Y. release worth checking out. And watch for them on tour this summer as well. (RC)
(Lesser Of Two, PO Box 3603, Oakland, CA 94609; lesseroftwo.com)

LET IT BURN - "This is the Sound" 10"

Ten songs of straight-up, nothing fancy, fast hardcore. They seem to be influenced by hardcore bands from the early to mid '80s, like NEGATIVE APPROACH, although the clean recording and use of some hooks gives it a newer sound. The songs are similar to the two originals on the split with the SCARLET LETTER, but superior recording and mastering make this a much better record to listen to. Though the style of music often gets boring, they play it well enough to make for a good record. (PA)
(Coalition, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, NETHERLANDS, www.metrorecordings.com)

LITTLE BASTARDS - "Greed Slaves" EP

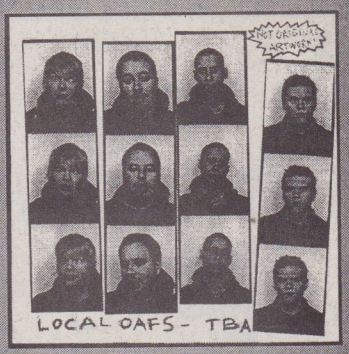
It says "Grind Crusty" on the back of the record and I think that pretty much sums up this Japanese band. Deep, dark, growling death/metalcore that is tuned down super low with lots of bass in the mix. Nothing to write home about, but definitely worth a toss of the almighty goat horns. (RC)
(Dewa, 89-11 Ishinada, Tonojima Tsuruoka, Yamagata 997-0815, JAPAN, dewarecords@mx51.et.tiki.ne.jp)

LOCAL OAFS - "TBA" EP

These crazy Swedes cut through the crap and serve up a blazin', lean mean 22 song 7". All the tunes are screamed in English with loud, distorted guitars and pumpin' energy. It sounds like they might've recorded this on a four- track in a garage. Fast, raw and excellent! (HM)
(Strandad Sjobuse, Hoders Vag 2, SE-611 50 Nykoping, SWEDEN, http://localoafs.cjb.net)

LORD HIGH FIXERS - "The Beginning of the End....the End of the Beginning!" CD

The final album from these garage destroyers. An onslaught of everything these boys have ingested since their early days with the BIG BOYS and POISON 13. I like the more straightforward garage stuff with the overload of feedback, off-kilter guitars, and great deep, dark vocals. It's amazing that the music can start to sound like one big mess, yet still be so catchy. The jazzier saxophone skronks seem to go on too long for my delicate taste, but it's nice to know they are there. (CK)
(In The Red, 1118 W. Magnolia Blvd, PO Box 208, Burbank, CA 91506)



LOS CREEPERS - "Punk Rock Since '96" CD

This is the second CD I have gotten this month of a band composed of big fat guys. This is a good thing, since bands with fat guys normally rock. LOS CREEPERS is no exception. Playing a style of fast greaser punk *a la* CADILLAC TRAMPS, LOS CREEPERS delivers the goods in one kick-ass fashion. Fast, snotty, tough (yet not macho), punk rock. This is.good. (JF)
(One Shot, 8339 Alburtis Ave, Whittier, CA 90606)

MVD/PREJUDICE - split EP

It doesn't matter if it's Oakland, California, Lawrence, Kansas, Berlin, Germany, or Greenfield, Canada... opening bands are the same anywhere you go. we've all been there before, feeling like the more cigarettes we smoke the sooner they'll stop playing, then looking down to an empty pack... they're still playing? shit! No rocket science here. The baffling part is how these bands make it to vinyl. Germany has some explaining to do about MVD—poor recording, lagging vocals and lagging drums, barely keeping up with dull guitar riffs make me hope Germany puts that wall back up, keeping these guys out of ears reach. At first I was relieved, hearing the fast and fairly competent drummer of Canada's PREJUDICE, but he's not good enough to make up for the exceedingly poor vocals, guitar, and lack of direction. Hopefully these bands haven't already been putting out bad records like this one for too long, and may actually get better. Their heart is in it. My ears just can't handle it. (VH)
(Simon Pare, 827 Goldbourn, Greenfield Park, Quebec. J4V 3H4, CANADA)

MANGANZOIDES - "Sobredosis De Horror" CD

I haven't enjoyed a surf record this much in a long time. It's extremely high energy and very punky surf reminding me of RADIO BIRDMAN at certain times. These Brazilians are having one hell of a time. I don't know what they are singing, but I can't help singing along. (CK)
(No Fun, C.C. 1909, C1000WAT. Correo Central, Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA, nofunrecords@usa.net)

MANIKIN - "Replicants" CD

Very solid all around. Kind of a new punk indie rock minus all the '80s influences that dominated indie for so long: VELVETS, HUSKER DU, etc. Mid-paced, good lyrics, intelligent production with shifting vocals and non-cliche guitar squeal. Lacks a killer song but all the instincts are spot on. Somehow, I have no doubt that these guys are *great* live. (RW)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

MEANS - "Vil/Viol" CD

The singer from the MEANS sounds oddly flat and atonal, kinda like Sammy from FANG. Actually the MEANS sound like FANG would have sounded if they had better equipment and weren't on drugs. Of course this record could never take the place of *Land Shark*, but it's still good... (DP)
(DoublePlusGood, PO Box 18721, Minneapolis, MN 55418, themeans@hotmail. com)

MEXICAN CHEERLEADER - CD

Chicago band with very pop-punk credentials. Former members of OBLIVIAN and APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN, and recorded by Denver's Matt Van Leuven, formerly of the GAMITS. Funnily enough, there's not a poppy lick within a mile of this disc. The only evidence of pop roots is the fact that they know their way around a melody, but this is not necessarily a good thing. They must be "real men," not boys now, as they've grown kinda serious, heavy, faux-tough and adopted a Moog organ, uuugghh. Enjoying it a smidge more on second listen, but as they may be pushing their own musical limits, they certainly aren't doing much for mine. (RY)
(Government Music, PO Box 268162, Chicago, IL 60626-8162 www.governmentmusic.com)

MIDNIGHT THUNDER EXPRESS - "Ace Up My Sleeve" CD

Great straight up rock 'n' roll from Seattle. Good male vocals, great piano, and lots of guitar solos. Good stuff for rock 'n' rollers. (SR)
(Empty, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98012, www.emptyrecords.com)

MISFITS - "3 Hits from Hell" EP

I'll always have a soft spot for the MISFITS, if only because "Last Caress" is one of the few songs I'm still afraid to let my parents hear. All of these songs are on other releases, but I'm relieved for two reasons: first, it is the actual MISFITS and not Jerry Only and whoever he decides to hire this week, and second, it is the actual studio recordings. I was expecting some kind of shitty bootleg when I put it on, and realizing that it wasn't just made my day. If you feel like helping the MISFITS take advantage of what few crazy collectors they may have, buy this. If not, just leave it alone. (MX)
(no address)

MODERAT LIKVIDATION - "Kuknancke" LP

This LP compiles all the recorded output of this old Swedish band as far as I can see (two 7"s and a cassette only release). Underrated and overlooked, this band were fucking great, sounding like a slower MOB 47 mixed with SWANKERS PMS. To those unfamiliar with the greatness

of old Swedish punk and hardcore, that means ripping non-metallic hardcore mixed with some slower more traditional punk. We all know school sucks, but this is one history lesson you should all sign up for. (TB)
(Distortion, PO Box 6294, S-400 60 Gothenburg, SWEDEN)

MONSTER SQUAD - "Anxiety" EP

This band has much potential. Their lyrics are well written, they can play their instruments. It's just that the music doesn't stand out from all the other hardcore bands around. Setting music apart from others is more than just inserting solos into generic hardcore progressions, which is what's happening on this record, with the exception of "Death and Destruction". That song is amazing, so keep at it MONSTER SQUAD. (DP)
(200 Cedar St., Vacaville, CA 95688, monsterpnx@hotmail.com)

MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE - "She Came from Outer Space" EP

First off, this record is rather tragically limited to 100 numbered copies, but I guess you can scream into the wilderness for only so long. CRASH NORMAL has failed to become a (punk)household name, so you start to flinch from the club after a couple of beatings. Sorry MR. CALIFORNIA, I guess there aren't enough people out there who can appreciate your truly fucked-up aggro wave-punk approach grounded in a solid trash aesthetic that stretches back over 25 years of wind-battered art-punk wasteland. This will, however, guarantee 100 people at your funeral... (RW)
(no address, but $5 and abandof1@hotmail.com...)

MUKEKA DI RATO - "Acabar Com Você" CD

Hailing from Brazil, MUKEKA DI RATO play eclectic, melodic yet ripping hardcore that reeks to me of something akin to FUN PEOPLE melded with E-150. Eclectic, as in they don't stick to one speed and even have a dub break on one song. Melodic, as in they got great hooks, not in a wimpy or shitty sort of way. Ripping, as in it makes you wanna break shit. According to our local punk ambassadors WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? they are the shit in Brazil and are as big as AFI in some places. I fucking love this and you should too. (MT)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)

MUSIC/NINJA - "The Record Player and Me" EP

This staggers back and forth between garagey distorted punk and moody, angular stuff that sounds a lot like early PUBLIC IMAGE LTD., especially the vocals. I actually like this a lot. Look forward to hearing more. (AM)
(Vanishing Vanity, http://vanishingvanity.cjb.net/)

MUSTA KASI - "Vanhojen Sanomalehtien Katsaus" EP

Yeah! This is brutal Finish thrash with gruff shouted vocals circa August 1999. We don't get any band information inside the sleeve, but every song rocks like a motherfucker! The song titles are all in Finnish, as is the singing, but the pictures on the sleeve would lead a reviewer to believe that these punks are opposed to police brutality and military proliferation. This shit is punk as fuck! Go get this hardcore thrash gem! (BR)
(Auvo & Kultsi, Pekantie 26, 58500 Punkaharju, FINLAND)

NAILED DOWN - "Perth Wolfpack" LP

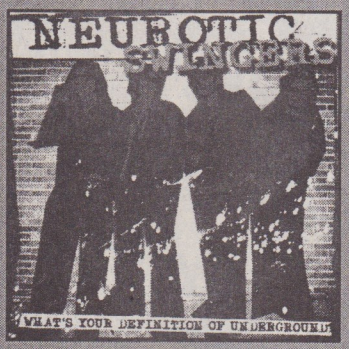
These ornery characters from Australia have been playing brute-force punk rock for many years on an assortment of labels. This LP gathers some of the songs from the Six Weeks, Spiral Objective, and Profane Existence catalogues. This band charges through every song with fists of fury! The lyrics for "Knuckle Sandwich" summarize the NAILED DOWN philosophy: "Do you want a smack in the head?/Some people can only be reasoned with through violence/Some people can only comprehend my hard fist/ Some people don't have the brains for common sense/Some people need a smack in the head." This is a no-nonsense hardcore outfit with lots of punk miles under their boots! NAILED DOWN are one of the roughest, toughest bands from Australia—and they grow them big over there! Get this LP! (BR)
(Power Up, Postfach 1114 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, mailorder@power.it.up.de)

NARCOSIS - "Heart Slows Down" LP

The majority of the first side is crazy fast grindcore, that brings in elements of bands like DISRUPT, PHOBIA and BRUTAL TRUTH. Vicious time changes and raging vocals kick the listener down a path of breathless destruction. This five piece is from England and contains the singer from HARD TO SWALLOW (remember them?). One side of the LP contains five songs of total mayhem, while the other side is one long drawn out crushing metal number that almost seems out of place here. Well worth tracking this bad boy down for side one alone! (RC)
($12ppd: Balowski, c/o Roy Meijnen, Haarweg 287, 6709 RX Wageningen, THE NETHERLANDS; balowski@hotmail.com)

NECKTIE PARTY/THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER - split EP

On their side, NECKTIE PARTY impresses with two tracks of ORCHID-esque intensity and dissonance. I think its cool that there are groups that sound like this who obviously criticize



the stereotypical masses of musically similar bands with song titles like "Count the White Belts." I fucking hate the white belts too!! Interesting that their songs were recorded by two members of UNWOUND, actually forcing me to draw some sort of connection to perhaps the rawness of the first UNWOUND EPs. THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER were equally as good with heavy doses of cool quirks. Pulsing bass lines, sudden time changes, and horn interludes. Very nice. Likely my favorite record of the month. (SP)
(No Humans Involved, PMB 28, 1910 East 4th Ave., Olympia, WA 98506, www.nohumansinvolved)

NEUROTIC SWINGERS - "What's Your Definition of Underground?" CD

Four stylish puddlejumpers clock in with a speedy dose of p. rock that reminds me of the TV KILLERS in their slower moments—they're raging and raw-boned, but never break over a comfortable stomp. "Dead Language," "Burn the Floor," "Gimme the Keys," and "Speed Drinker" all exhibit that devil-may-care attitude that I can't help but admire. Neat neat neat. (JH)
(Shark Attack c/o Meantime, BP 737-42484, La Fouillouse, FRANCE)

NIKAD - "Man or Machine" LP

This record sort of took me by surprise as I turned up the volume of my stereo high enough to hear the quick quiet noodling part at the beginning and was suddenly hit over the head with the angry, tight, rhythmic approach of this band. What strikes me most about NIKAD is the pulsating groove created by an extremely tight rhythm section, bringing to mind SHOTMAKER or THREE PENNY OPERA as easy points of comparison. Taking the obvious Canadian influence a bit further, there are definite traces of ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY and URANUS in the vocals and general song structure. Yet, NIKAD seem to do a bit more in the way of variety and give the songs individually a good deal of character. Recommended. (SP)
(Firewalk With Me, PO Box 65, 1110 Wien, AUSTRIA, www.thefirewalkwithme.com)

NO MORE FEAR - "Walkin' On" CD

Jumping guy with vest and shaved head on the front, pointing guy with vest and shaved head on the back and songs like "Unite" and "Family." I think we know the score? Bingo! Generic 88 style youth crew. I love this style, and originality is overrated, but for this genre it really has to be great to stand out. The songs aren't memorable and the crummy mix doesn't help. If you have to find every band that wants to sound like BOLD mixed with CHAIN OF STRENGTH then track this down, I'll pass. (TB)
(Youth Crew, youth_crew@hotmail.com)

NO USE FOR A NAME - "Hard Rock Bottom" CD

A radio friendly clone of NOFX, NO USE are in heavy rotation on Live 105, and are playing one of those big festivals sponsored by same. Those of you who aren't tired of this tired sound rush out and buy this along with your PAPA ROACH and LIMP BIZKIT. (DP)
(Fat Wreck, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

NUBS – CD

The long awaited NUBS CD. Twenty years in the making! Thanks to the potty humor tastes of the pack known as *KBD* collectors, this band has a collectible single *Job* from 1980. That single is included here as well as thirteen other tracks. I couldn't really dig up the details but I think the other tracks are new recordings since this band is playing around these days. I'm sure some are songs from years ago. With titles like "Legless Vet" and "Morgue Watch," you get the rude but fun point. It's hard to be disappointed here since I didn't expect much from these guys anyway. (RL)
(PO Box 210418, San Francisco, CA 94121, www.nubs-sf.com)

THE OFFBEATS - "Dumb Looks Still Free" LP

A little sticker on the cover promises "25 Cuts from Cleveland's '80s Punk Wise Guys." Apparently these guys are not new to vinyl, having appeared on a compilation or two, in addition to releasing some vinyl of their own. (Still, I'd never heard of them and I was listening to punk back in the early to mid '80s when this stuff was being put out.) So what's it all sound like? It sounds like faster paced, mid-'80s punk rock from some dudes from the Midwest that go out of their way to sing in English accents. Some songs are better than others, but there isn't anything really compelling here. If you're interested in checking out an average mid-'80s punk band from the Midwest, you might want to pick this up. There are some interesting liner notes to go along with the whole thing. (KK)
(Smog Veil, 774 Mays #10-454, Incline Village, NV 89451)

OIRO - "Oi Spiesser Gib ma Feuer" EP

Yes! These five punk rockers from Dusseldorf, Germany come screaming at you! The snotty vocals are backed by superior guitar work. The OIRO band gets in your face right from the onset with "Sick of You," sung in English. This 1977-style punker segues into "Oi Spiesser," which is damn decent. Side two starts off with "Refusal to Pay," which has a good Hellcat Records feel to it. "Useless" is the fourth and final cut, and this one starts off slow and builds adequate momentum. These guys are very talented and the faster songs indicate that they would be good live. (BR)
(Kindspeck, Johannistorwall 34a, 49074 Osnabruck, GERMANY, www.kindspech@freenet.de; www. kindspech.de)

PARAGRAF 119 - "Du Har Ikke En Chance..." LP

Fast and angry political punk with dual raspy female/male vocals from Denmark. This album is a benefit for the Anarchist Black Cross in Copenhagen. Great, intelligently written lyrics; topics include 9/11, blaming radicals for everything, and national security. (SR)
(Box 578, 2200 Kobenhavn N, DENMARK, paragraf119@mailbomb.net)

PIRANHAS - CD

An organ in a punk band? I guess that's the new hip thing to do. Take some rock 'n' roll guitar lines, a typical punk guy vocalist, the usual drums and bass, add in some organ, and I guess you get this band. Their songs are totally decent, I just imagine liking them more live. Maybe the recording didn't do them justice. It's important to note that some of these songs have been previously released as singles. (MM)
(On/On Switch!, 780 Post St, San Francisco, CA 94109)

PIRX THE PILOT - "Fri Night Seafood Buffet" CD

I really like seeing this band play live, and this is their best release so far. This three piece has a good female and male vocal dynamic, and they all sound very well practiced and recorded. Ernst definitely has his own vocal and song writing style, which is evident if you compare this release to his past projects. This release continues the band's sound—without any unexpected (but maybe needed?) surprises. (MM)
(New Disorder, 115 Bartlett St, San Francisco, CA 94110)

PITS - "Belief In Ruins/Your Violence Is Sinister"

This comes across as a Brit reunion thing, due to the email address and the older looking band. All I could find on these guys was a 45 released last year. So I guess we have new good Brit punk band. In the vein of COCKSPARRER and MAJOR ACCIDENT, this is powerful, anthemic, and definitely British. A very strong 45. (RL)
(Rapid Pulse, PO Box 5075, Milford, CT 06460, thepits@paranoia.co.uk)

PORNSTORE JANITOR - "Porn Again" CD

Boys will be boys, I guess. Packaged in flames and a naked tattooed nun is PORNSTORE JANITOR. This is a 13-song collection of scum-soaked treble-y ditties with song titles like "Drink, Drive & Masturbate," "Dope Chick," and "Rape." Hardcore fans of over the top sleaze 'n' roll, enjoy. (DL)
(Scooch Pooch, 5850 W. 3rd St. #209, Los Angeles, CA 90036)

PREACHER GONE TO TEXAS - "Choice Vs. Chance" CD

This album...um...I think the band is well meaning. PREACHER GONE TO TEXAS has a cool name, and they are from Iowa, which makes me drawn to them. The music is that metal-emo sound that we have all come to know in the past five years. The vocals most often sound like CONVERGE-style vocals, with a lot of speaking parts (which I really like). They are sung over pretty mid tempo metal-emo guitar parts, which are often, arranged in 3/4 time, and which surprise me sometimes when the distortion subsides. There is occasionally a piano, which complements the sound. This isn't as predictable as I thought it would be. But I still am not a big fan of this sound. The music will settle into a groove, which feels like it would get boring if the band wasn't playing on such nice equipment. I like a band to fight for my attention, and I'm not getting that here. A solid effort, however...and not offensive in any way. Just harmless. (WR)
(Sinister, PO Box 1178, La Grange Pk., IL 60526, www.sinisterlabel.com)

PROJECT HOPELESS - "Överklassen" EP

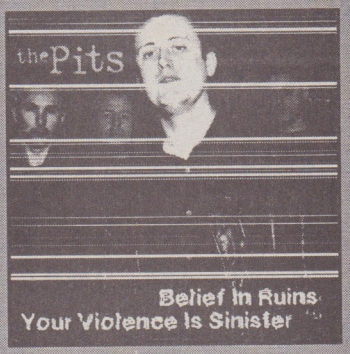
Blasting Swedish hardcore assault a la MOB 47 and MODERAT LIKVIDATION. Raw and kind of thin production that compliments the style quite nicely. Would like to see some more from this bunch soon. (MT)
(Not Enough, trash_oskar@hotmail.com)

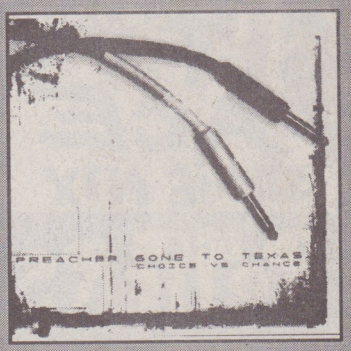
THE PROWL - "What Are You Doing?" EP

First, please forgive my lack of research for not knowing the actual breakdown of Christian, non-drinkers on the East Coast vs. the West Coast. Listening to the PROWL reinforces my stereotypes of East Coast kids with baggy pants, headbands, and crosses around their sweaty necks who write letters to peanut butter manufactures about thirteen-syllable words in their spare time. It's nauseating. But sometimes you have to push that out of your head, open a beer, and enjoy a good hardcore record for what it is. This record stands out not only as good fucking hardcore record, but for their lyrics about razor blades, murder, and "bloodbath orgy's" which is complimented by their cover of "Conquest for Death" by the NECROS. (VH)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

RAMONES - "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow" EP

A bootleg of a bootleg? Or maybe a reissue of a bootleg? Live versions of "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow," "I Can't Give You Anything," and "Let's Dance." Joey's dead. Dee Dee's dead. Let 'em rest in peace. (KK)
(no address)





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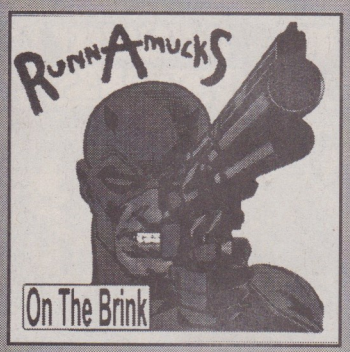

RECORDS

RAMONES - "We Are Punk Generation" EP

That sucked. I was out of town for a week (Grand Canyon, very em ...punk rock) and got back to find out there's another RAMONE dead. They're fuckin' dropping like flies—Tommy and Johnny must be shitting themselves. I'm worried too, the death of a RAMONE usually preempts an attack on American sovereign territory. Fuck! Joey and Dee Dee gone and Paul McCartney still lives and breathes. Anyway, this is yer basic run of the mill RAMONES live 7" bootleg. The tracks are as follows: "Havana Affair," "Commando," "Beat on the Brat," "Don't Come Close," "She's the One," and "Go Mental." Recorded in the US '77 and UK '78; the sound quality is quite good and the cover looks cool, so wingnuts take note. Shit, I'm starting to believe that they really *won't* tour again... (AD)
(no address)

RANDY – "Cheater" CD

This is apparently an in between albums release here. Three new songs and three previously released songs here. More of their raw punk rock 'n' roll via Europe. Now that the HIVES have blown up maybe RANDY will get it's due over here too. (RL)
(G7 Welcoming Committee, PO Box 27006, C-360 Main Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4T3, CANADA)

RED FLAG 77 - "Moving on Top" EP

Snotty English punk influenced (as the name suggests) by the music of 1977. Unashamedly drunk and pogo-friendly, this isn't bad and would go down well with the current resurgence in all things smelly and spikey. Four tracks on puke colored vinyl. (Only kidding.) (AD)
(Dirty Punk, BP 302, 59666 Villeneuve d' Ascq cedex, FRANCE)

RESERVE 34 - "Classified" EP

Very solid six-song EP from this Vancouver outfit. Passionate, melodic hardcore in the vein of early DAG NASTY mixed with some obvious Youth Crew influences as well. There is a real sense of urgency behind the music as a whole and a melody in the writing that really makes for a good listen. I guess the band broke up already (it says "1996-2002" on the cover) but this record is still surely worth a listen. (SP)
(EM, PO Box 14728, Portland, OR 97203-0728)

RESTOS FOSILES - "Sonidos" CD

These kids have pretty much got it goin' on, if you know what I mean. They know exactly how to do melodic punk. The mid-tempo songs are kept exciting due to the inclusion of dance beats (oh shit!), and the fast songs remind me of DBS, which is a very good thing. Lyrics are included, and the artwork is simple but fitting. More like this, please. (MX)
(No Fun, cc 1909 c1000wat, Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA)

RETOX - "Last Call" CD

These in-your-face boozers seem to have written an entire album of drug and alcohol anthems with every image on the packaging promoting over-indulgence. Musically, RETOX sounds like a sloppier, more belligerent BARFEEDERS. Pretty cool. (HM)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246, www.maltsoda.com)

RIISTETYT - "Tervetuloa Kuolema" EP

These guys recently released an LP of new songs which gave me the same feeling as being trapped in the front seat of a car while the obnoxious drunk behind you pukes out your window, and all over your shoulder, for forty five minutes. Lets all thank Jesus Christ our lord that they got it out of their system and are playing the same kind of fierce European hardcore on this record that they did twenty years ago. Six of these seven great songs were originally released on Fight, now remastered, on colored vinyl w/a bonus track. Wooohoo! (VH)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

ROTTERS - "Sit on My Face Stevie Nix/Amputee"

Blank-label reissue of this legendary lawsuit-provoking '70s LA punk *classique-del-roque*. Both tracks are lewd/lude-inspired slogs through the degenerate basic programming of the male mind. So, the ROTTERS offer cheap psychoanalysis. Do you sing along? *Well*, there ya go...wonder if Stevie Nicks is still as steamy? (RW)
(no address, try Dionysus mailorder)

RUNNAMUCKS - "On the Brink" CD

Whoa! This is the stuff. Total JERRYS KIDS/GANG GREEN feel to this—raw guitars, quick drumming—kinda grabs me the way that USV LP did. Thumbs up and let's hope this makes it to vinyl. (MT)
(Runnamucks, 810 S. Winter Park Dr, Casselberry, FL 32707, www.runnamucks.com)

SATANIC SURFERS - "Unconsciously Confined" CD

Oh dear. I really liked this band's last record when I reviewed it a couple months ago, but I just don't know about this. The music is really similar, still the fast skate-punk stuff, but they've

added a bunch more mid-tempo songs that verge on boring. The vocals are also really different. The singer appears to be actually trying to sing, as opposed to just letting the fuck go like last time. I just don't get the same feeling of passion from it. It just sounds like he doesn't care about what he's saying. The lyrics are still right on, but I just don't feel it anymore. (MX)
(Bad Taste, Box 1243.S-221 05 Lund, SWEDEN, www.badtasterecords.se)

SCALE SHEER SURFACE - "Speaker Killer" EP

Pounding thrash with little trace of groove or rhythm gives way to more melodic, technical, jazzy breaks—if you can imagine VICTIM'S FAMILY or NOMEANSNO with a much bigger hardcore/metal influence perhaps, I dunno... Definitely a little different, good stuff. (AM)
($5 ppd: Conspiracy Records, Lange Leemstraat 388, 2018 Antwerpen, BELGIUM)

SCAT RAG BOOSTERS - "Sidetracked" EP

I feel like I'm coming down off my exhilarating day of walking around beautiful San Francisco. I think I'll just lie here on the *MRR* carpet. Oops, I fell asleep. I can't figure out why this music is making me so sleepy. It's got a nice soothing, monotonous sound. The singer is lulling me, even when he seems to be screeching. This is garage rock that sounds like the noise is coming through a tin can. I don't mind shitty production as long as the songs get to me. These just aren't. Zzzzzz.... (CK)
(Zaxxon Virile Action, 1816 3rd East Ave, Vancouver, BC V5N 1H2, CANADA, zaxxonaction@hotmail.com)

SCAT RAG BOOSTERS - "I Mean It/Someday Baby"

Murky, dense, and inscrutable. The SCAT RAG BOOSTERS turn out two tracks of bottom-heavy bilge that'll have your noggin buzzing and your brow sweating. Good noise. "I Mean It" is a real troglodyte ballad with a neat sense of forward propulsion. "Someday Baby" is a migraine-vivid tale of love and love lost that speaks more passionately about heartache than SCOTT WALKER could with full orchestra accompaniment. They're tortured men, whoever they might be. (JH)
(Goodbye Boozy, via Willa Pompetti, 147-64020 S. Nicoló, ITALY. goodbyeboozy@tin.it)

SCHOLASTIC DETH - "Killed by School" EP

This is what punk rock is all about. Ripping music, great lyrics with explanations and whole ton of fun (remember that?). Third and unfortunately last release by this bunch of hardcore nerds. More songs about books, school, and the state of the scene. Musically it's breakneck thrash, almost like a youth crew HERESY, the production is great: raw as fuck, with feedback all over the place. Lyrics are smart and funny, song title of the month (year?) being "What Would Heresy Do?" Genius. (TB)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

SEE YOU IN HELL - "Maso Jako Maso" EP

SEE YOU IN HELL, who are from the Czech Republic, crank out seven songs that mix a bit of metal, hardcore, and emo all together. Choppy rhythms and erratic drumming have the music surging and jumping all over the place. They try to do a cover of DRI's "Violent Pacification" but fall way short. I can tell they put a lot of energy into the music, but in the end it really didn't pull me in like I was hoping for. (RC)
(Filip Fuchs, Grohova 39, 602 00 Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC, orba@seznam.cz)

SEGUE - "String of Tools" EP

Choppy hardcore/scream-emo that is a bit gloomy and a tad raw on the edges. Loose, jangling guitars take charge with the various band members pitching in mostly scratchy vocals to round this little vinyl platter out into a damn solid release. (RC)
(Primary Thoughts, PO Box 4995, Portland, OR 97208-4995)

SELKKAUS - "Luokkatastelu—Teoria & Käytäntö" LP

Finnish anarcho-punk which rocks which has a pretty good LAMA feel, I think mostly for the way the music seems to bounce as opposed to going full bore thrash speed. Dual shouted and times chanting vocal attack, in such a manner that if I spoke Finnish they would be a great band to swill booze and sing along with. (MT)
(Kämäset Levyt, Mechelininkatu 24 B 30, 00100 Helsinki, FINLAND)

SEPTICEMIA/AMOR, PROTESTO Y ODIO - split LP

Two blistering and raw, crusty punk bands from Brazil. AMOR, PROTESTO Y ODIO goes for the throat with dual male/female screams attacking patriarchy and gender role enforcement within the punk scene, as well as colonialism and other forms of oppression. This is a little more metal-tinged and rambling than I would like, but it's still good shit. SEPTICEMIA hangs out on the same topical terrain, and sounds like they were recorded in the same tin shack, but has more guitar play and is tighter on the melodies. (AC)
(Bloody Noise, Fabricio Rocha, Rua dos Andradas, 72, Jd. Vergueiro Sorocaba/SP, BRASIL, Cep: 18030-510, bloodynoise@zipmail.com.br)

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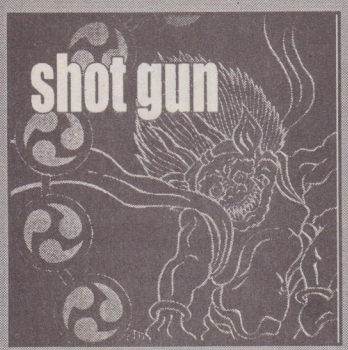


SERGEANTS MESS - "When You Were Mine" EP

.....holy fucking cum rags, this two-track English garage slop is pretty goddamn good.....it could almost pass as mod....I mean you could maybe get some mod pussy by playing this at a party.... or give a copy to that cute mod girl next door, maybe she'll let you suck her boyfriend's cock.... who knows....all I can say is SERGEANTS MESS will leave a mess in your pants and "my" mess on your mother's face..... produced by Billy Childish....(SW)
(Smart Guy, 3288 21st PMB #32, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.smartguyrecords.com)

SERVICE ANXIETY - "The Persistent Inversion of Solution By Protective Powers" EP

Quirky, chaotic, staccato punk, heavy on the politics. In a lot of ways this sounds similar to those weird bands like FAT DAY or the STRETCHHEADS but with a much more direct approach lyrically and musically. Great for both thinking to and dancing to, I'd wager. (AM)
(DeadCEO, PO Box 906, Chicago, IL 60690)

SHANK/UNHOLY GRAVE - split EP

Five Jock Stein inspired hardcore numbers from Scotland's greatest shame, SHANK. High pitched shouts tagteaming with deep scary growls, enough to scare any crusty's half-breed shitty mutt. Like sticking your head in a microwave while someone blasts NAPALM DEATH's "From Enslavement to Obliteration" up your back door. Just the ticket for all you grind and blast enthusiasts. Japan's UNHOLY GRAVE give us four songs, two of which belong to the STUPIDS and are seemingly recorded in an old tin bathtub. This leaves me flat and dry. A sort of LAWNMOWER DETH, O.L.D, METAL DUCK, NAPALM DEATH roll about. Never one for the funny approach to this style, always preferring mine to be tainted with doom and gloom and tales of the undead sucking the eyeballs out of Jewish princesses. (SD)
(Sterilized Decay, PO Box 16, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 3GH, ENGLAND, www.sterilized@mrnice.net)

SHOCK TROOP - "Your Worst Nightmare" EP

SHOCK TROOP sounds a whole lot like DEATHSIDE in all ways, although their sound is a little less dark and more spirited. The cover art of the record shares the same style of the DEATH SIDE *Bet on the Possibilities* LP. SHOCK TROOP lacks the intensity of DEATH SIDE, but they are still very good. This is worth checking out. (WR)
(Overthrow, Maruta Palace, 402, 21-5 Shimo-Shinshuku, Ichikawa, Chiba 272-0102 JAPAN)

SHOES THIS HIGH - "The Nose One" EP

Absolutely essential must-have for the developing legions of UK late-'70s DIY punk fans. First track last heard on the *Killed by Death* DIY comp from three or four years back that was mastered about 25% too fast. This reissue of their sole 45 is at proper speed and all four tracks are killer-diller slop-pop. New Zealand amateur hour genius from 1980. Compare to GORDONS, FALL and PRATS. (RW)
(Raw Power, PO Box 7127, Wellesley St., Aukland, NEW ZEALAND, rawpower@paradise.net.nz)

SHOT GUN - "Dawn It!" EP

First solo EP from these Japanese thrashers, who recorded a split with SOUND LIKE SHIT last year. This is a great record—frantic, high-paced, and driving, with high, pissed female vocals that the guitars can barely keep up with. Six songs of fist-in-the-air excellence. (AC)
(Rampage, Mühlenstr. 24, 33607 Bielefeld, GERMANY, rampagerecords@gmx.net)

SICKNESS - "Weak Minds" EP

Repetitive, but energetic crusty chaos punk from France. Two ways to sing: screamy and growly, all here. Fuck the system, mohawk and dreadlock unity. (AC)
(Murder, Olivier Lacoste, BP 11, 33023 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE)

SINNERS & SAINTS - "The Sky is Falling" CD

Y'know when you're watching *The Osbournes* and at the end there's always an ad for some horrible music industry ooh-might-be-slightly-dangerous-fucking-Coors-commercial crappy rock band? That's what this is like. (AD)
(Bridge Nine)

69 CHARGER/STILETTOS - split 10"

From the amphetamine-driven school of garage rock is 69 CHARGER, blazing through your ears like a bullet. 69 CHARGER bring on the big guns with huge guitars and plenty of raw throat action—I just wish this was a little more distinctive than the other hundred bands who do this same schtick. On the flip are the more interesting STILETTOS. The STILETTOS pound out a more mid-tempo hick-tinged style, and a least have a personality of their own. All in all, this is still a pretty Average Joe kind of release. (DL)
(Roulette's, Lijsterstraat 32, 5735 ET Aarle-Rixel, NETHERLANDS)

SLUMBERJACK - "Nitro Ground Shaker" LP

German Gearhead-type punk that varies from almost psychobilly to straight-up

RAMONES punk rock. Retro Americana-influenced concept and lyrical content with song titles like "Pinball Queen," "Rollercoaster Ride," "Surfing with Miss High School USA (!)," "California", "Babe-o-Rama," and on and on. So you can guess it's kinda dumb yet fun. Yes, that's what this is—dumb, yet fun. The perfect compliment to the SLAPSHOT Mike Thorn is blasting in the next room. (AD)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr.14, 50939 Koln, GERMANY)

THE SPINNS - "And I Know/Wild Ravin'"

Surfy garage. Simple and primitive. Rockin' and dancey. The singer has a nice, deep, soulful, southern drawl. It's a shame only one song has vocals. (CK)
(Demonbeach, PO Box 6693, Raleigh, NC 27628-6693, spinns0@lycos.com)

SPITFIRES - "Three" CD

After getting past the truly horrific artwork (airbrushed painting of the band dudes on a hill surrounded by scantily clad women) this disc is rocking. Rock 'n' roll punk with tons of balls and swagger. Coming off like a rockier ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN or even later TURBONEGRO. Some tracks are a touch on the cock rock side, but for the most part this CD smokes. (TB)
(Longshot Music, www.longshotmusic.com)

THE SPITZZ - "Take Me to the Hospital/Get Kicked"

A side is a bluesy rocker with spazzy vocals that grew on me with repeated listens. B side almost sounds like an outtake from DAVID JOHANSEN's first solo LP, which, though a bit surprising, ain't bad. (DD)
(TaRio, PO Box 581, Cambridge, MA 02238, www.spitzz.com)

SS - "The Original" 12"

Holy shit, this is nuts. Pre-Stalin hardcore from Japan. This a bootleg of their one sided LP. Recorded live this is totally rough and noisy, almost losing control but managing to (just) hold it together. This was recorded in '79 (originally released in '84) and is so far ahead of its time in terms of speed and chaos. This was recorded the same year as the first BAD BRAINS 7" on the other side of the world, proving that hardcore was evolving worldwide. Their blistering cover of "Blitzkrieg Bop" is classic. Musically this may a little hard on the ears as its a very rough live recording, but historically its a gem. (TB)
(no address)

THE STAND BY ME - "In My Car" 7"

Cool mod-punk three-piece from Japan. Like fellow Jap popsters SANDIEST it brings to mind all the '79 mod revival British stuff, but a lot more energetic and ...well, punk. A must for anyone who likes the JAM and modern pop-punk. (AD)
(1977, Office: 4-17-15#009 Nishi-kawaguchi, Kawaguchi-shi 332-0021, JAPAN)

STEAM - "70 Time 7" CD

Earnest late-'90s European style sXe from Italy—you know, sort of like SPAWN or FEEDING THE FIRE—mixed with Jersey shore mosh sensibilities like MOUTHPEICE or later ENSIGN. Wish it sounded more like early NEGAZIONE or WRETCHED, but what can you do? (MT)
(Youth Crew c/o Dario Santori, Via I Maggio 32, Cinisello, 20092 Milano, ITALY, youth_crew99@hotmail.com)

STUPID BABIES GO MAD - "Kichigan and Knife" EP

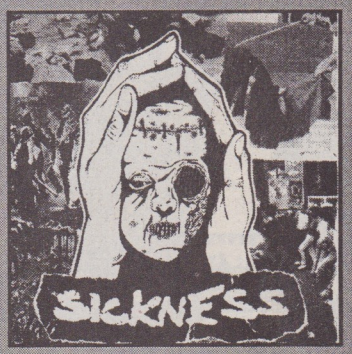
First of all, I'd like to praise this band for sending a reviewer copy—an all too rare occurrence with vinyl these days. *Hear me bands? When your shit is hard to find we reviewers deserve a copy, just in case we actually like your music!* Lucky for all, this is a great band—my first record of theirs (there are four other 7 inches here) and I will play the shit out of it! I will play it for my friends...then maybe they'll want one too...see how that works? Aggressive, fucked-up, distorted, and Japanese. A stellar punk rock elemental combo. Beastly good shit! (RY)
(No Sense, c/o Matt T., 58 Preston Ave, Pittsfield, MA 01201)

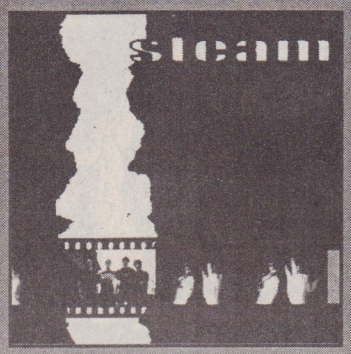
SUBTONIX/GLASS CANDY - split EP

SUBTONIX have sadly broken up, but we lucked out that they have left behind this treasure and the full-length LP coming soon. "Into the Fire" is a beautifully written and executed song about gentrification. Chaotic keyboards, scary saxophone, JOY DIVISION-esque bass and lyrics that nail the feeling of loss and helplessness around gentrification. GLASS CANDY's "Crystal Migraine" is an OK art-rock song , but even with Ida No's fierce growl, it does not match the intensity and passion of the SUBTONIX side. This record is a feat for Troubleman's catalog of which, in all honesty, the vast majority is crap. Obtain a copy of this now! (DT)
(Troubleman Unlimited, no address)

SUICIDE MILKSHAKE – "Too Scared to Sniff Glue" CD

A charming band from the UK that mixes SHOP ASSISTANTS, MUFFS, and many a UK band with a gal singer *a la* GYMSLIPS. Very British, very charming stuff. I'm surprised





Damaged Goods or Crackle isn't all over this. A bit on the rocking side, fans of the gal singer poppy punk scene will eat this up. (RL)
(Submerge, www.suicide-milkshake.co.uk)

SWINEHOOD - "Don't You Fuckin' Point at Me" 10"

Whatta pedigree: members of MISBRUKARNA, TOTALITAR, BRAINBOMBS, in a one-off band that recorded these tracks in 1993 and 1994. Seeing the light of day now, the songs suffer from that same one-off nature of the project; the drumming is formulaic and vocals and lyrics seem a little tacked on. But the energy and attitude of this record is undeniable. The guitars are mean enough, and the common STOOGES-meets-MOTORHEAD genetic pattern that all members share shines through in the end. I'm sure this will sell out in two seconds, so get your giddyup. (RW)
(Ken Rock, Fabriksgatan 39B, 412 51 Gothenburg, SWEDEN)

SWING DING AMIGOS/THE BLACKS - split EP

How many different bands are there named the BLACKS? The unfortunate answer is that there is now one fewer, as this band broke up after their singer/guitar player died. The record? There's nothing all that spectacular here, in my opinion. The BLACKS deliver a noisy, dirgy, grindy but faster paced song that made me nervous and had me wondering whether I'd had too much coffee earlier. SWING DING AMIGOS belt out two quick ones, neither of which left an impression. I think they were fast. (KK)
(Chemical Valley, PO Box 77142, Tucson, AZ 85703)

SWORN IN - CD

Metallic, chunky hardcore locked in groove with what seems to be a trend of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE-esque bands coming from the East Coast these days. I think its sort of ironic that these bands want to sound tougher than nails when all they're singing about are girls that dumped them. Get over it! (SP)
(Bridge Nine, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052)

TEENAGE RAGE - "It's Not Over Until We Say Goodbye" CDEP

Last gasp of this East LA band as they are no more. Not a bad note to finish on either, four tracks of very SoCal sounding hardcore. Up-tempo, but with plenty of melody, this sounds a lot like the first PENNYWISE LP which, believe it or not, is a good thing. (TB)
(One Shot, 8339 Alburtis Ave, Whittier, CA 90606)

THIRTY3 - "The Oatman Arizona Seven-Inch" EP

This record definitely has its moments, but thanking God on the sleeve is not one of them. The songs contain a mix of different emo styles. Musically they stick to straight drum beats and and mostly poppy guitar riffs that suffer from HOT WATER MUSIC syndrome. "Liars, Critics, and Bears Oh My!" their best song, is slower and heavier than the rest, and vocalist sticks to screaming. The songs tend to be at their worst when they attempt to sing and the pop emo side of their music is shown bare to the world. (PA)
(Clearview, PO Box 16757, Portland, OR 97292-0757, www.thirty3music.com)

THREATS - "Back in Hell" CD

British dinosaurs release brand new 6-track EP and... it's actually pretty fuckin' good! Mid to fast-paced punk that hits all the right spots. (AD)
(Punknite, 420 Conant Avenue, Union, NJ 07083)

THE THURSTON HOWLERS - "Lodge Party" LP

A bold foray into the under-exploited but not wholly unfamiliar territory of Lodge Rock (Frat Rock with a fezful of fuzz and a dash of surf licks). The titles tell it all: "Lodge Party," Miniskirt Action," "Go Go Beach," "Beer Run." Fans of organ and twin guitar attack garage take note. (DD)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14, 50939 Köln, GERMANY, www.screaming-apple-records.de)

TOTAL FURY - "Committed to the Core" EP

The kids on the East Coast are still drying their underpants after these folks whipped through on tour. This tour 7" is awesome, total circa '82 DC worship. This 7" is way rougher than their 12", but think the power of MINOR THREAT mixed with the sloppy roughness of TEEN IDLES—add a dash of Japanese mayhem and you have TOTAL FURY. (TB)
(Youth Attack)

TRANSYLVANIA 500 - "Rock 'n' Roll Party" LP

The most ridiculous and juvenile slab of poly-whatever-they make-records-out-of-these-days to fly through here since the NAZIS FROM MARS LP; needless to say, I love it. Count Suckula on "haunted Hammond organ" and Wolfboy providing the "Hot Roddin' Beat"—that's it! Organ, drums, some sound effect, an occasional bit of vocalizing—and it actually rocks in a retarded way. If LEE MICHAELS (I'm sure the name means a lot to you kids) had gotten hip to the ELECTRIC EELS...no, if COUNT FLOYD was inspired by MR. QUINTRON... come to think

of it, forget the standard *MRR* namedrop description. Best part is Count Suckula, in an accent more Apu than Bela, dropping gems such as: "Tonight... we will play. We have flown all the way from Transylvania. [heckler: How did you get here?] I turned into a bat, sir, and flew. And I didn't go across the Atlantic ocean: I went the long way." Be smart and buy multiple copies! (DD)
(Wee Wanna, 1060 King St. W #141, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S-1L8, CANADA, www.weewanna.com)

UCA. - "Self Infliction" CD

UNLAWFUL CHAOTIC ANARCHISM from Japan fucking throw the hammer down with four tracks of fist-pumping punk rock. Good production bring out the sweeping guitars and hammering drums while the speed of the music is pumped up enough to keep the circle pit going strong. Simply put, this is very rockin', very Japanese, and very very good! (RC)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624*0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/-mcr/)

THE UNDERTAKERS - "13 Garage Punk Rippers" LP

Originally recorded in 1991, Oregon's UNDERTAKERS get the makeover with a new 2002 remastered pressing. Do they deserve it? Does the Pope wanna play guitar for SLAYER? Hell yeah. With 13 tunes, and two covers from the MOVING SIDEWALKS and the MIRACLE WORKERS, this is a garage gem. The UNDERTAKERS take the garage sound we love, heavy it up, add a little more aggression and raw energy and *wallah*—a thudding piece of work. Part the PRISONERS, part the MONOMEN, part the CYNICS, and a load of teenage anger—this is an unforgivably missing classic in any garage collector's pile. (SD)
(No Brains, Varenstraat 374, 3765 WZ Soest, NETHERLANDS, www.geocities.com/nobrainsrecords)

VICTORY FLAG - "The Soundtrack to Your Miserable Life" EP

VICTORY FLAG play fast and polished hardcore with weird mosh metal breakdowns. It reminds me of the newer SUICIDAL TENDENCIES stuff with a definite Clevo hardcore influence. No lyric sheet was included, but I caught things about crews and sell-outs. Their one-sheet says this record was voted "Best Regional CD" in the *Cleveland Scene* 2001 Readers' Poll. That being said, I am now going to get out the FACE VALUE 7" and redeem myself as a human being. (CC)
(Mutant Soldier, PO Box 25305, Cleveland, OH 44125)

VIIMEINEN KOLONNA/NAILBITER - split EP

NAILBITER plays steady hardcore with little guitar leads that remind me of DEATHSIDE. Their lyrics deal with problems in society. VIIMEINEN KOLONNA play similar style, but it is less straightforward and more metal inflenced. Their lyrics deal with personal frustration, the meat industry, and such. They play solidly, but are a little boring on record. So....? (WR)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D36, 333710 Tampere, FINLAND, www.kolumbus.fi/fight)

VIRUS - "Nowhere to Hide" CD

Top notch '80s Brit-influenced hardcore punk, these guys are possibly the best of the spikes-and-studs bands. In the same boat as the CASUALTIES, A GLOBAL THREAT, ANTIDOTE etc. what makes VIRUS stand out above the rest is their energy, tempo changes (ranging from mid-paced street-punk anthems to almost DEATHREAT-like blasters), decent lyrics, and just good tune writing. Recommended music for hair dyeing. (AD)
(Punkcore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

WIGGLUN HIPS - "Oh Lord!" 10"

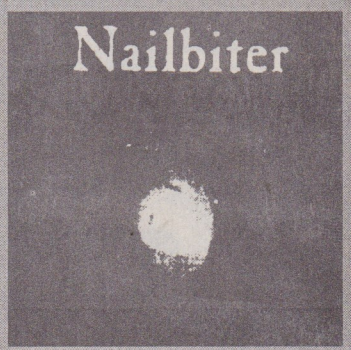
Eight tracks from four dudes, recorded in the Year of Our Lord 1998. The WIGGLUN HIPS (note the idiosyncratic spelling) are/were from Sweden, turned out choppy/punchy garage rock with a decidedly '60s bent, and penned such pearl as "Fuck New England," "Chinese Song," and "Mike Got Me Off the Juice." Ain't doing much for me at this point of the afternoon, though a half case of beer might aid in its appreciation. (JH)
(Kenrock, Fabriksvägen 39B, 412-51 Goteburg, SWEDEN)

WOLVES - "Art. Culture. Work" CD

I've been hearing some degree of hype surrounding this band of late. Members of ORCHID and all that jazz. Aesthetically, WOLVES takes some cues from NATION OF ULYSSES (or more recently, bands like REFUSED or INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY) in presenting their work as a manifesto in pursuit of a given set of ideals. WOLVES makes clear their point that art must exist as a political act and that the commonly held definitions of art, culture, society, history, etc., must be rejected. The music is still well within the realm of what you would expect considering the members' pasts. With an overall jangly, dissonant, crashing approach, WOLVES make for a good listen and a good read. Another solid record from Coalition. (SP)
(Coalition)

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH - "Human Meat...Tossed to the Dogs of War" EP

Vicious rabid-dog vocals melded with driving guitars and a pounding rythmic assault com-



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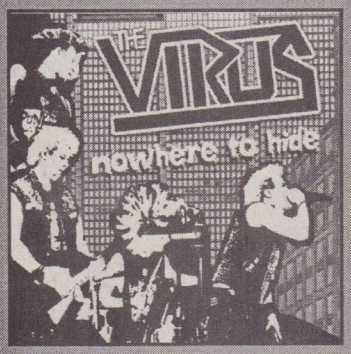


bines to give WORLD BURNS TO DEATH much in the way of pure killing power. While this is a much rawer production value than we normally get with Prank stuff, it serves the music very well, adding to its ferociousness. Fans of TOTALITAR, SKITSYSTEM, and STATE OF FEAR should take note and start screening back patches now. (MT)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892)

YACOPSE/TUMULT - split EP

For some reason I've always been kinda scared to check out YACOPSE records, even though I always see ads and good reviews for the full-length on Slap-a-Ham. If you're at all familiar with YACOPSE you know what to expect on this record. Completely brutal, crazed blast mayhem akin to a rougher DISCORDANCE AXIS with few songs clocking in over a minute. *Very* solid. I thought the TUMULT side slightly weak in comparison. Very straight-forward with less "grind" influence and much more hardcore appeal. This record is worth the purchase, though, for the YACOPSAE side alone. (SP)
(Spiral Objective, PO Box 126 Oaklands Pk, SA Australia 5046, AUSTRALIA)

YANKEE WUSS - "All Your Life..." LP

The latest wake-up call from Portland, city of 200 punk houses. Awesome matte rose package with a full cut-n-paste booklet which includes all the lyrics and more, decrying capitalism and complacency in its many outfits and getting personal, too. Musically driving and powerful stuff, but with melody, harmonies, unorthodox stops and starts, and viscerally satisfying fabric of female growling (one member of HARUM SCARUM here) and male singing. You should pick this up. (AC)
(Ministry of Peace, PMB 121, 4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, OR 97214)

THE YOBS - "The Worst of the Yobs" LP

The YOBS, a rude X-Mas reincarnation of early UK pop-punkers the BOYS, have re-recorded some of their favorite holiday tunes from their previous LPs on this disk. While their first Christmas record is available with bonus tracks on CD, *The Worst...* offers a straighter, more streamlined set of tunes, closer in sound to the original BOYS. It doesn't have the goofy SFX that crowded their first seasonal effort, but may not be quite as consistently obscene as their second, but it's still catchy and fun... and even better if you're soused. (SS)
(Knock Out, Postfach 100716 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

YUM-YUMS - "Blame It One the Boogie" LP

Alright, it's the YUM-YUMS—automatically I have to say, "great power pop out of Scandinavia." This is amazing. They remind me of FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE at times, then throw a nod to the VAPORS and maybe even PSYCHOTIC YOUTH (I'm not sure who came first—the YUM-YUMS, or PSYCHOTIC YOUTH—but I believe they are countrymen). I actually heard somewhere that these guys once shared a member with TURBONEGRO (I'm not sure about this either). The point is, this rocks—it's brilliant and you should get it. (BM)
(Screaming Apple, Düstemich Strasse 14, 50939 Köln, GERMANY, screamapp@aol.com)

XBRUTAL FIGHTX/THE DEAD UNKNOWN - "Heaven and Hell" split CD

Two metal bands; one a churchy band (XBRUTAL FIGHTX), the other which embraces the Dark Lord (THE DEAD UNKNOWN), duel it out in a battle of good and evil. It's brutal. It's metal. It doesn't sound like GISM or EXECUTE, so who cares. Nice concept though—it would be interesting if the band didn't suck. (MT)
($8: Legion, 16928 SE Powell #38, Portland, OR 97236)

XSIDETRACKEDX - "Every Inch of the Way" CD

Fast and thrashy straightedge youth crew hardcore that was pretty good until I got to the last song that calls for more acceptance to Christian beliefs in hardcore music. First of all this is a strange take on Christianity in hardcore, because as far as I can see, Christianity is a very prominent force in the modern hardcore scene and it has been for a while. While this obviously saddens me to no end, the presence of endless Christ-core bands along with the labels and magazines is completely overwhelming. We can all see how destructive religion is to our very existence (just pick up any newspaper). So I don't really think I need to go into a long speech on why I wish religion would just abandon the hardcore and punk scene altogether. (RC)
(The Legion, 51664 SE 5th St, Scappoose, OR 970596)

ZSK - "Riot Radio" CD

Really tight melodic hardcore with political lyrics in German and English. I wish people could do this genre without adding in the fucking 88 FINGERS LOUIE backup vocals, but apparently, due to some rip in the fabric of space and time, that is not possible. I mean, even STRIKE ANYWHERE does it. Beyond that, this is pretty fucking good. The lyrics are right on, and the vocals have that gruff passion that I look for, and the insert provides lots of helpful radical resources, including information on PETA and the Zapatistas. You can tell a lot of heart went into this, and I like that. (MX)
(Wolverine, Kaiserswerther Str. 166, 40474 Dusseldorf, GERMANY)

V/A - "Commercial" CD

If you're not familiar with Traffic Violation Records, and you are interested in DIY punk rock, I would strongly suggest picking up one of these samplers. Traffic Violation is one of my favorite labels around today because they put out a musically diverse selection of bands, mostly all from the New York area. All the bands are passionate about what they do, and Wells (who runs TVR) is just as passionate. Traffic Violation has put out great records from CONTRA, SPLURGE, STRIPED BASSTARDS, as well as the amazing INSURGENT 10" and recent split EP with SOMETIMES WALKING, SOMETIMES RUNNING. All TVR records have superior layout, as well. This sampler has tracks from all the mentioned bands, plus five others. I would strongly suggest checking this out. (WR)
(Traffic Violation, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY 11733, www.trafficviolation.com)

V/A - "Concrete Waves" CD

JFA, the WORTHLESS, and BLUE COLLAR SPECIAL alternate five tunes each on this Duane Peters production. All the bands play their own style of well-produced, energetic, melodic hardcore, but with such similar production, they all sorta sound the same. Consistent and good. (HM)
(Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank CA 91510, www.disasterecords.com)

V/A - "50 Different Types of Punk Rockers That Taste Like Shit Together" CD

This here is one goofy CD compilation. Varied in style from goofy pop punk to full-bore hardcore and back, this is overall a pretty good listen while working on layouts for the zine…could have done without some of it, but ain't that always the case with comps? Winners here are KUNG-FU CHICKEN, EYE SPY, RED MARTIAN (whose singer sounds like early Kevin Seconds), DIRTY OLD MAN (whose track "Cyborg Reagan" rules!) ILL ALLEGIANCE, NEVER SAY NEVER (who sound sort of like J CHURCH) and the JANE DOZ. The comics contained within are a nice touch—but while the cover promises 50 bands, there are only 15 to be found within. (MT)
(Chicken-Head, 7438 Etiwanda, Reseda, CA 91335)

V/A - "Noise Tent 2002 Spring Sampler" CD

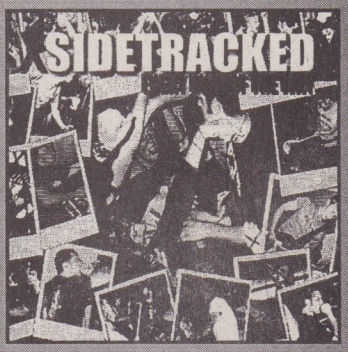
Welcome to my final review for *MRR*! Go Denver! This comp proves that I won't be wanting for rock music in my soon-to-be hometown. All music included was recorded by Mike Jourgensen, including his own bands, WISTERIA, and ABDOMEN, as well as a personal track. This guy doesn't screw around! The powerful, yet sweet WISTERIA kick it off, watch out—hooks, rad girls, charm...dangerous! Next up (and then some), all fucking fantastic, are: THE AGENCY (former members of BOSS 302), DUMBASS BROTHERS (former FLUID personnel), THE GEDS (former LADONNAS), THE SPEEDHOLES, JET BLACK JOY, the LADONNAS, DENUNZIO (former ACROBAT DOWN/SMALL DOG FRENZY), the OTTERPOPS, the MAYBELLINES, DERAILED, LOS LUNCHADORES and tons more. Write now, it's limited to 500. Ta-ta, a new scene awaits! (RY)
(D.U., PO Box 18677, Denver, CO 80218)

V/A - "Punks Riot" LP

Excellent punk rock compilation on a good lookin' picture-disc. Highlights including OI POLLOI's "Guilty," BEERGUT 100's "Fists Full of Copper," RIOT CLONE's "One Less Parasite," MASS MURDERERS "Drive Me Sick," and VARUKERS "What Are You Gonna Do." Also included are: TRUTH DECAY, DETESTATION, DISORDER, and SUBSTANDARD. One downfall is a couple of shitty recordings. (SR)
(Fight 45, 1 Passage Krachet, 75018 Paris, FRANCE, www.fight45records.com)

V/A - "Tampere vs. Portland" EP

Well here's a heavy hitter of a comp—FUNERAL, ATROCIOUS MADNESS, KAAOS, RIISTETYT, WAR MACHINE, BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS, PAUSE, and ABSURD ATTITUDE. Studded jackets, d-beats, and raw punk attacks against the system abound. This is fucking great!
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND, www.kolumbus.fi/fight)



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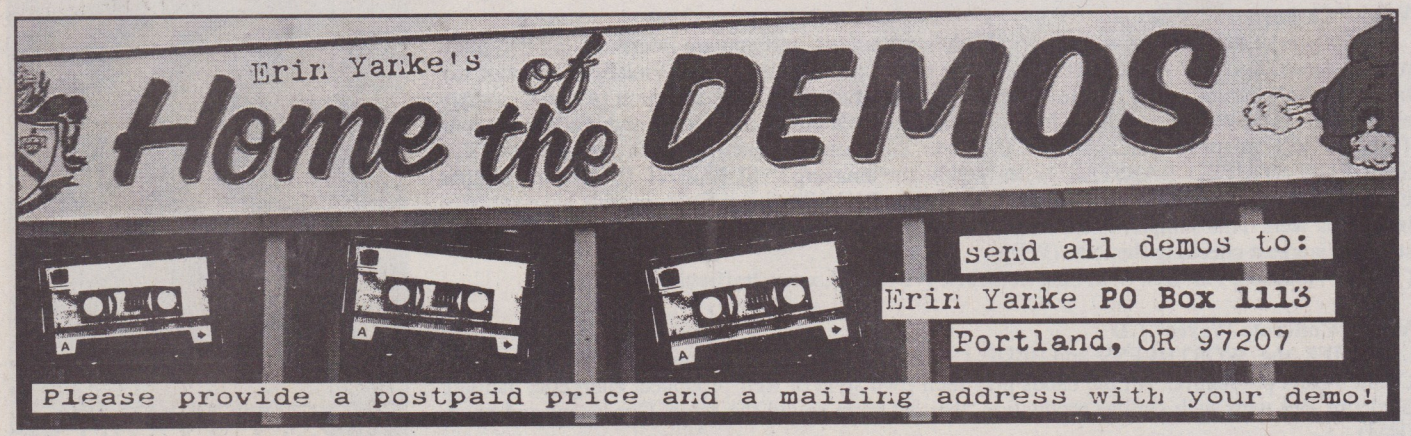

AUTONOMY NOT SUBMISSION is a comp put out by French punk label Pariah Rules, as a benefit for AFA, which I think is an anti-fascist group. The comp. features HEYOKA, melodic and midtempo hardcore, thick female vocals with good group backups, HUMAN SPARK who are midtempo punk with pop sensibilities, a lot like NEW MODEL ARMY, G.D.B. are fast and gruff, and do 2 of their 4 songs on the comp. are DOOM covers, STUFF LIKE THAT change tempo a lot, oscillating between the fast FEEDERZ songs, with the spazzy vocals to match, and slower mosh parts with talking over them, ATTENTAT SONORE is basic straightforward punk, fast parts and midtempo, mixed male and female vocals, LES NANTIS has more of a rockaroll straight forward side to the early punk sound, GODZILLA play fast straightforward punk with little surprises, like almost cowpunk songs and good rolling bass playing. There are lots of lyrics, but the way the vocalist sings them they don't get in the way of the music plus lots of good sing along parts, B 12 is superfast and thrashy with an occasional mosh part and dual screaming male and female vocals, but this one song they make all these kick ass animal noises, it's hilarious, MALAKA have a midtempo for hardcore pace in the faster parts, straightforward guitar driven slower parts, with an earnest singer guy. There's also a live song by CONFLICT. ($3 or Euros. 29 song CD, no lyric sheet. BP 536, 21014 , Dijon Cedex, France.)

THE BLUEBLOODS sound to me like a tough yet melodic hardcore band, a la AMERICAN STEEL, but with more of a hoarse-voiced singer. On the live stuff though he sounds way more like Lemmy. They've got good production on the studio part of the demo, easy to turn up real loud. The live stuff is vocal heavy. ($8. 12 studio songs and a live set from Sept., 2001 on the CD, lyric sheet. 22 Clinton Ave., Danvers, MA 01923.)

CAUGHT RED HANDED have the musical framework and polish of NOFX, but the lead vocals sound like BIG RIG. They've got lots of group back up vocals, too. (15 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1608 NE 195th Street, Seattle, WA 98155.)

COMMOTION is a moody mix of straightforward punk, shouting, screaming vocals, some slow and dark rock, and a variety of wa-wa pedals and other effects that aren't experimental, except in the strict confines of punk rock. Their songs are really long, and they ebb and flow within themselves, but have good endings, which seems extra important for this sort of style. (7 song CD, no lyric sheet. 2409 Cheshire Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93309.)

DEAR AUDREY is a full on sap factory. Paced on the lower end of mid-tempo, they're only slightly rougher than the extreme edge of pop punk with a crooning singer. Then they throw in middle break parts which are kind of emo, not love emo, but pain emo. Probably to help cut the sweet down to a manageable level. ($5, comes with button. 6 song CD, lyric sheet. 4363 Falconview Way NE #101, Salem, OR 97305.)

Seventeen band **Earth Liberation Front** comp. featuring HYDROPHOBIA from Mexico (super thrash, with a mix of vocals from guttural to yelling. Mosh intro to one song), MISTAKE from the Netherlands (the catchiest songs on the comp, straightforward punk, one's a bit thrashier, and the singer has with smokers vocals.), DISARMAMENT from Japan (classic blown out production, doesn't sound fast until you really concentrate, deep throat vocals), and MANHUNT (who play in the vein of FALSE SACRAMENT, but more metal, with half the vocals shouted) DEAD BY DAWN (classic metal meets hardcore), THEY FEAR THE RECLAIM (on the faster side) DEATH ACTION SQUAD (midtempo and bass driven, screamer), FREE BARABBAS (d-beat, vocals are polar opposites of guttural and screams to make an eerie combination), DISSOLUTE (moshy) , REMAINS OF THE DAY (dark and heavy, mixed with quiet middle bits or thrash parts), WATCH ME BURN (pure evil freaky children vocals, fast music) BLEEDING KANSAS (straightforward hardcore, midtempo), CYCLE OF MISERY (guttural and sort of fast, hard to hear past the from-the-gut vocals), BLASTONECROSIS (hilarious sample, straightforward and basic, trade off of male and female vocals), COLAPSO (tough thrash), and FOIL (tinny and blown out, on the slow side) from the States. THE AGGRESSION OF DAVID BANNER doesn't say where they're from, but they're representing the emo hardcore here. Most of this comp is good quality straightforward metallic hardcore, and the flow of the bands works really well. Plus, it's cheap! Good work. ($3.50 ppd. 33 song CD, no lyric sheet. PO Box 7301, Santa Monica, CA 90406-7301.)

Foot in Mouth Productions released a 4 band demo, featuring **KILL THE HIPPIES, C.D. TRUTH, 16 PIECE BUCKET,** and **HAILSHAFT**. C.D. TRUTH plays basic rock, with some poppy harmonies, and a guitar sound that's sort of surfy. They're singer has a tinge of crooning to him. KILL THE HIPPIES is also in the rock band realm, but sloppier and more energetic. The boy singer has kind of a snotty tone and something about his voice reminds me of Mark Mothersbaugh, and the girl sings like THE GRUMPIES singer, but it's more understandable, and that song reminds me of the sloppy live footage of X from the early days. HAILSHAFT has both feet in early punk, sounds kind of slow these days, na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na- NA-na-na style...and has tough guttural vocals that are spoken, easy to understand. 16 PIECE BUCKET has a driving rhythm section, guitar that reminds me of THE DEAD KENNEDYS, and a singer that sounds like a beer drinking loudmouth, getting things of his chest. I mean that in the best way possible. There's really good flow to this comp. (12 song CD, no lyric sheet. 610 Philip Ave., Akron, OH 44305.)

HELLSHOCK fucking blazes on their demo. They play hard and fast thrash parts, and their mosh parts are metal without the annoying solos and wanking. There was a lot of headbanging going on at my house when I was listening to it. Josh says there are touches of THE ACCUSED, METALLICA, and SLAYER. There is a mix of a singing and shouting in the super gruff cookie monster style, screaming about societies injustices. Plus,the demo captures the energy they bring to a live show, but is so clear and well recorded without losing any power. Yeah Mike Stanioch. (6 song cassette, lyric sheet. PO Box 2626, Portland, OR 97208.)

INDEX tried to send this demo to MRR and have Max Ward review it, and I think it's right up his alley. If it appeared on a 625 comp I think it would seem slower than the average, but it's dark and tough, with the puking hardcore singing style. ($2. 5 song CD, lyric sheet. PMB #570, 21010 Southbank St., Sterling VA 20165-7227.)

MIDNIGHT plays hardcore that's thick and full, sometimes as fast as possible, sometimes almost as slow as midtempo. There are really great melodic bits, which makes it stand out in the world of "as tough as possible" while still being fucking tough itself. Dancable hardcore, you know? The vocals are guttural and shouted. (5 song cassette, lyric sheet. 2336 North Killingsworth, Portland, OR 97217.)

NO MATRIX have a mixed sound of early California beach punk, like THE CHIEFS, and modern snotty pop punk. I'd say the balance is about 75% the former, though. (6 Euros or $7. 6 song CD, lyric sheet. Cornamagh, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, Ireland.)

ORIGINAL POLKITCH is a good mix of early stripped down rockaroll, the catchiness of street punk, and early punk energy and toughness. If you recorded THE DICKIES live with more rock and a touch less silliness, with more group wo-wo-wo vocals this is more or less what you'd get. (6 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1-21-5 Kamirenjaku Mitaka, Tokyo Japan.

RENO DIVORCE has later day SOCIAL DISTORTION style down pat. There's a little more moving into the shouting vocals for this singer guy, but it's musically dead on. The record with Prison Bound on it, I can't remember what it's called. (11 song CD, no lyric sheet. PO Box 181236, Denver, CO 80218.)

SHOWERING ASHES plays slow to midtempo hardcore, the kind of hardcore that they listened to the evil metal before they found punk and are combining the two. The vocals are gut wrenching scream style. ($1. 6 song cassette, lyric sheet. PO Box 1275, Iowa City, IA 52240.)

SWINGSET HANDS play poppy emo, or slightly deep pop, depending on the song and how close you want to dissect them. It's got a pretty slow tempo, and a singer that sounds like he just broke up with his girl friend right before recording vocals. The backup vocals make the songs sound more like pop punk, a slower SICKO. (4 song CD, no lyric sheet. 120 Wildwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14210.)

THUMBS UP play sometimes thrashy and some more midtempo hardcore. There is no dark side to this hardcore, just straightforward anger. The singer is on the more melodic side of screaming his guts out. Lots of group back up vocals punctuating the chorus. (5 song CD, no lyric sheet. 32 Blaine St, Allston, MA 02134.)

YOUR FUNERAL sounds like if THE OFFSPRING listened to metal instead of AGENT ORANGE. That's the difference in their little guitar fill things. There's a little bit of snotty crooning in the vocals, but mostly this guy belts it out. (5 song CD, lyric sheet. 706-501 Pacific St. Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6Z 2X6.)

Two quick asides, if you are in GUERRAETERNA, the CD you sent was totally unplayable. Sorry. And watch for NOWHERE in late August touring the Puget Sound, on a sailboat for real this time, with Arwen in tow.

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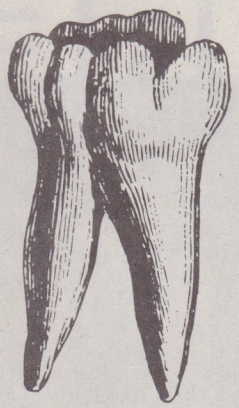

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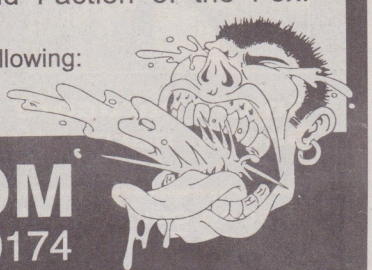

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Charles Romalotti's new novel Talon is now available!

Talon has such well-written characters, you just gasp as you follow them through every suspenseful and sickening turn in the story. I loved it.
- Morbid Outlook Magazine

Romalotti definitely has a real talent for writing.
- Adam, H2O

Talon is a great follow-up to *Rash*. Just when you think you've experienced the unthinkable in *Rash*, *Talon* hits with more of the Romalotti reality. Romalotti does it again.
- RealmGothica.com

Talon is a perfect book for anyone that didn't grow up to be a suburban carbon copy. It is a realistic dark journey that is amusing and disturbing at the same time.
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ZINES

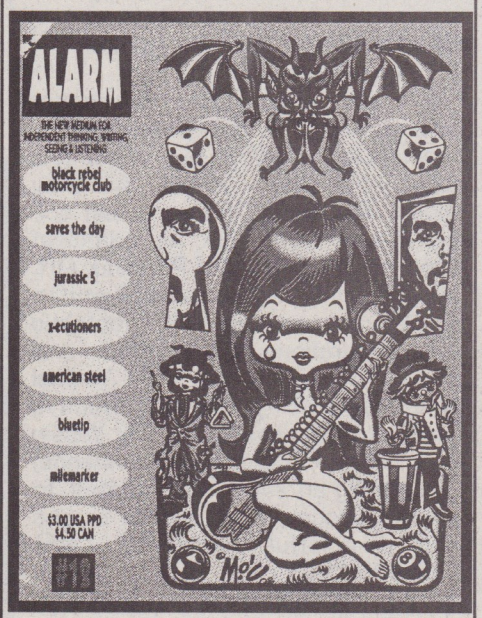
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (KC) Karoline Collins, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (NN) Nellie Nelson, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ADMISSIBLE DECAY #14 / $1 or trade
8.25 x 11.5 - copied - 4 pgs
Brief Hungarian fanzine covering the more brutal thrashy realm of punk. Good interview with See You In Hell, reviews, classifieds, and brief articles discussing the after effects of Sept. 11th and the lack of quality zine distro. Good Stuff. (MT)
c/o J-P Muikku, Csongrád / Fö u. 20-24, 1/1 /H-6640 Hungary
jpmuikku@cc.joensuu.fi

ALARM #12 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 84 pgs
Couldn't get into this indie rock/emo mag. Interviews with Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, Milemarker, Jurassic 5, American Steel, Saves the Day, etc. Nothing wrong here but none of the attitude I like to go with my punk rock. (GF)
PO Box 200069 / Boston, MA 02120

ALL THIS IS MINE #7 / $4 - $6
4.25 x 5.5 - copied and other - 44 pgs
Wow! The latest edition of *All This Is Mine* is one clever/crafty/creative little bundle! I can't even begin to imagine how long it took to put this together. The cover is either screened or wood block print (sorry, I can't tell for sure), there are little bits glued inside (mine came with a fish shaped eraser, a tiny shell and an interesting stamped tag), the spine is tied with ribbon, the inside cover pages are wallpaper samples and there is a rad little ink drawing of a stylish Victorian girdle done on thick parchment paper. I'm not sure if every copy comes with the same accessories, but I'm certain that you will get something equally impressive. I suppose I should mention the contents now that I'm done frothing at the mouth about the great packaging, eh?! Lots of writing on easy-to-do art projects and challenging yourself to be creative/step outside your daily routine. Tips on D.I.Y Xerox transfers, how to build a cardboard hut, starting a mail art project, and the glory of owning an eraser. Some personal stories (very well written, but too short for my taste) involving love, summer, and a strange year long friendship...plus a pesto recipe, a free sticker, a handful of reviews and some really good quotes. *All This Is Mine* really hits the spot (much like a great big glass of iced tea on a hot summer



afternoon). Prices listed are sliding scale...perhaps you should drop Sugene an email before sending cash. (KC)
Sugene / 5245 College Ave #718 / Oakland, CA 94618
ATIMzine@aol.com

ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW #7 / $4.95
11 x 8 - printed - 84 pgs
War is peace, freedom is slavery, ignorance is strength! So reads the cover of this highly charged political zine. Included in this issue are articles on the war in Colombia, America's war against Iraq, the fight against international terrorism, and domestic artists (go figure?) There is also an article on rough music (punk), and the address of Milosevic to the Hague criminal court. And if I may add, this address from a war criminal points out some very real truths about America's double standards regarding international relations. But then as everyone should know, the spoils of war belong to the victor. Milosevic will rot in a foreign jail while the USA victors go on to fight bigger and bloodier wars. Anyway, this magazine is a great read for those with an open mind to enlightened ideas—the rest of you can go to hell! (HH)
AAL Press / PO Box 4710 / Arlington, VA 22204

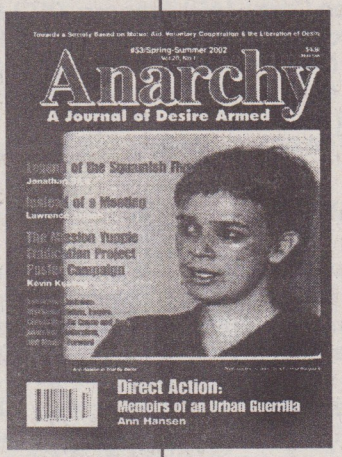
ANARCHY #58 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 84 pgs
Ouch, my head. Pretty long and fairly dense pieces in this mag. There is a long one about The Squamish Five, (Canadians convicted of bombings in the early '80's) a cool one about a squat in Montreal, takes on anarchism. I liked all that and the really long book reviews were informative, although straying from the books themselves quite a bit. There seems to be a lot of 'anarchy' zines around, and I must admit, I'm starting to get all the nuances of each's ideology mixed up, so I can't really nail this down for you as far as "where they stand". The only thing here that bothered me was the piece by Kevin Keating about his Mission Yuppie Eradication Project. He has some ideas and some of his posters were funny, but even he admits in this that his 'project' consisted of himself, and he is way too impressed, especially considering his impact was limited to himself, a couple of nervous yuppies and the SF

Weekly. Surely *Anarchy* can find an activist more deserving of coverage. (GF)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 1446 / Columbia, MO 65205-1446

ARTCORE #17 / ?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 30 pgs
Ha, Ha. *Artcore* is filled with interviews and history lesson articles of old punk bands, yet the font is so small none of the old punk rockers can read it; even I, a young whippersnapper, had to steal a pair of magnification reading glasses to read it. But what you get is pretty good. History/discography lessons for Devo, Toxic Reasons, Radio Birdman (great article!) plus interviews with more recent bands, but most seem to be of bands that are already broken up. This long running, well produced, good-looking magazine, based out of Wales and put out by Welly, is packed with hardcore punk rock—pick it up and learn something kids. (SD)
1 Aberdulais Rd / Gabalfa / Cardiff, CF14 2PH / Wales, UK

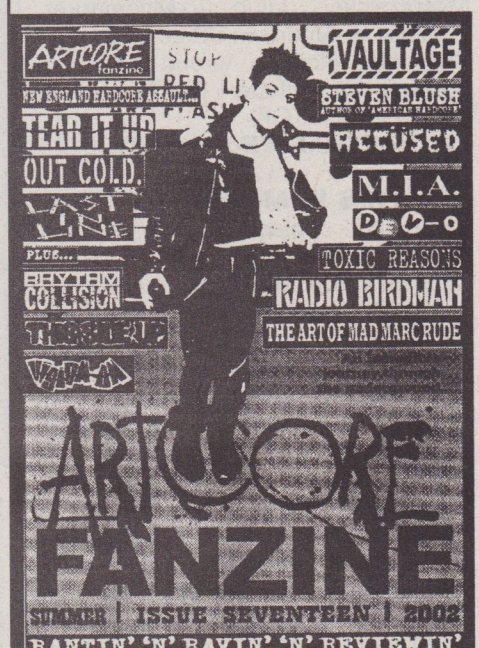
AS THEY DROP BOMBS #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
This is a collection of articles and essays by US political prisoner Ali Khalid Abdullah. He's remained active in prison, raising the consciousness of other prisoners, improving some conditions there, and writing. This booklet is all about breakin' down the "WAR-ON-TERRORISM." I was moved by his passion and sincerity, and the clarity of the writing here is great. Highly recommended! (NN)
Fog Light Press, c/o Mutual Aid Portland / PO Box 7328 / Portland, ME 04112
landoflawn@yahoo.com

BARRICADA#17 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pgs
It's been a little while since I reviewed *Barricada*, and while I'm always pleased to see a zine able to pump out issue after issue, this one left me a little disappointed. Most of the zine consisted of anarchist news updates from around the world, anarchist perspectives on war in the Middle East, analyses of the IMF protests, and examples of state repression. The subjects approached by *Barricada* are interesting, but the execution falls a little flat. Somewhere in the analysis and debate the writer's voices are lost, leaving more of a sensation of diatribes rather than accounting of personal experiences. Content is good, character is not so much. (CR)
PO Box 73 / Boston, MA 02133



BLACKTHORN #1 / 2 stamps
11.5 x 17.5 - printed - 19 pgs
I've been carrying this newspaper around with me everywhere—it is beautiful and everyone always wants a copy when they see it. As they should. *Blackthorn* is the newest collective-run, DIY (with an anarchist slant) newspaper out of Portland, OR. A range of informative and well-written articles are coupled with fantastic large illustrations, block prints, and comics. Topics range from radical Anarchist history, to reproductive health, to interviews with Dir Yassin from Israel and Drawing Resistance, to a touring art show in the States, to a news section. And it even comes with a colorful poster by Lydia Crumbley. (SD)
PO Box 11046 / Portland, OR 97211

CHAQUE JOUR #19 / **TIMOTHY'S MONSTER** #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 34 pgs
The *Chaque Jour* side (done by Giovanni of *Cryptic Slaughter* fame) is really, really good. Cartoon narratives about visiting Spokane, WA...going to a show at the home of bigoted Christians and all the "brilliant" banter between the punks and the religious nutters, being depressed on the eve of his 25th birthday, and getting stuck at his parent's house. Giovanni is an excellent storyteller and artist. Humorous tale (sans illustrations) of a house party, wet socks, feeling jaded, Yankee Doodle Dandy, delicious green hummus, old friends, 1995 reminiscing and passing out even though you'd wanted to "party all night long." Follow this up with the *hilarious* "Grammar Watch and Other Thoughts" (the glories of the Spokane/Washington accent and the pronunciation of words) and you've got quite a gem here. Unfortunately, the other side (*Timothy's Monster*) reads like a scribbled note that doesn't really make any sense. Pretty much just a stream of consciousness rant plus one page of info on Jon Batchelor (political prisoner). Oh well. In any case, this is well worth your buck...get out your pen and paper and send for your copy today! (KC)
Giovanni & Ryan / 5607 5th Ave NE / Seattle, WA 98105



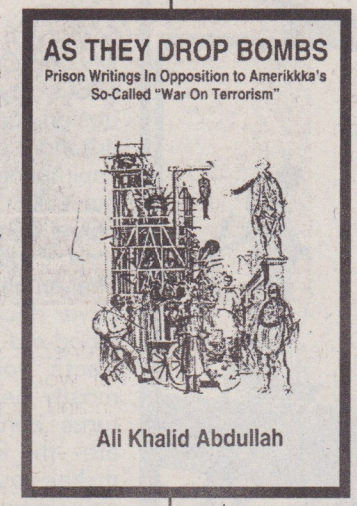
CHEWBACCALYPSE #2 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
I love the layout of this zine. It's clean and simple (a rarity in zines), but not boring. The content is fairly standard: interviews (SMD, Fuerza X, New Earth Creeps), reviews, show pictures

and flyers... nothing ground breaking here. But that doesn't mean it isn't well done. If the world of zines was a grocery store, this zine would be junk food: there's no serious substance in it, but it's still really great and super fun to read. And it's from Alameda, the Bay Area's own mystery pirate island, so you really can't go wrong. (CJ)
3370 Washington Ct / Alameda, CA 94501

CLASS WAR #83 £1
11.5 x 16.75 - printed - 16 pgs
A fun read, and some pretty interesting "updates" type news about police, protests etc. Lottsa British focus (duh) particularly anti-RoyalFamily stuff. Pretty hardline on the direct action front, which is one thing, but a little overboard in the pro-violence aspect. I hate cops too, but I don't like seeing photos of anyone getting kicked in the head. Also, for a publication that is pretty intense on bashing liberals and poseurs, why they wanna run an interview with the International Noise Conspiracy is a mystery to me. (GF)
PO Box 467 / London, E8 3QX / UK

COST OF LIVING #2 / $3
7 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Cost of Living combines an anarchist perspective (Emma and her quote is on the cover) with a unionist sensibility. This magazine has a very clean presentation (with all the good and bad of computer generation) and reminds me a bit of the old *Punchline* zine. The content is right out of the IWW with a reprint of Solidarity Forever, organizing the EDA (Exotic Dancers Union), Mayday, and a longish review of a few books on globalization. *Cost of Living* cannot be argued for the style and delivery of their content even if unionism is not your thing. (AR)
1936 N Prescott / Portland, OR 97217

THE CROSSTOWN DAILY #1, 2, 3 / $1 each or $2 for all three
3 x 4.5 - copied - 12 pgs
When an artist is successful at creating a believable, fictional world, it all clicks. It works. These three pocket-sized comics are an introduction to the fictional town, Crosstown, and a few of its characters. The stories are simple yet poignant; memorable because they become as real as your own experiences. Each slim comic has an easy momentum, like a walk with a friend. Artist J. Kelly promises a forthcoming "big" comic simply called *Crosstown*, which will hopefully elaborate on the small glimpse into town you get from these perfect minis. (SD)
J Kelly / 124 E 103rd #18 / New York, NY 10029

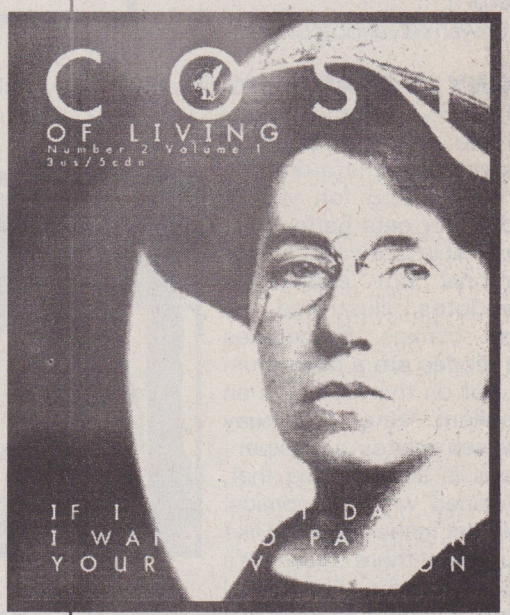


DESTROY WHAT BORES YOU #2 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 16 pgs
Dave kind of sets himself up for criticism with the name of this zine, taken from a Feederz song (or was it Paris '68?) This zine would probably bore anyone not into boy hardcore bands. In that genre, it is good enough to refrain from using the two-word review that I promised myself I would write if I hated this ("Bored. Destroyed"). The interviews (Down in Flames, Koro) are above average. The pictures of boys with their mouths open are really good. Also includes Dave's top 100 HC 7"s and old columns by Tim Yo and Shane White. It's just a little, uh, unexciting. (GZ)
Dave Hyde / 26 Lacona Dr / Patterson, NJ 12563
fightordie@hotmail.com

DIMESTORE #6 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 30 pgs
Good writing, readable handwriting, clean artful layout, but something is missing. The people and place that editor Pranay wants to tell about (Baltimore and the kids he lived with) seem awesome, but it is as if he's telling the safe stories, the expected tales of day to day. I wanted stories like the introduction tale: a coherent and emotive look at moving out of the dorms. The bulk of the zine felt like a list, a character sketch not quite complete, and a little evasive of what seems like an amazing year of going to school and living on your own for the first time. (SD)
Pranay / 10 Yellow Flax / Littleton, CO 80127

DOLL #178 / ?
7 x 10 - printed - 154 pgs
Doll has been described as a glossy more mainstream Japanese version of *MRR*. Have to say that it's somewhat true, and while I can never read a word of it I always look forward to seeing it show up here at *MRR* HQ. A must if you even want to think about keeping up with the flood of Japanese records that come out every month. This issue has a huge piece on H2O, Nine Lives, The 5,6,7,8's a reprint of DS-13's tour diary from *MRR* and lottsa brief articles on a ton of new Japanese punk bands. (MT)
NO 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-ku, Tokyo / Japan

FUCK THE TRUTH #1 / free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 16 pgs
There sure are a lot of words in this zine. That's not necessarily a bad thing (I'm a big fan of words myself)—but, see, there's nothing *but* words in here. That made reading it a bit tedious... a little more creativity with the layout would have helped those of us with minuscule attention spans. This is your basic sincere fanzine, with plenty of politically minded rants interspersed with short fiction and more personal issues. It's really heartfelt, and I can tell that a lot of effort was put into the writing. However, the way it was copied made a lot of the text dif-

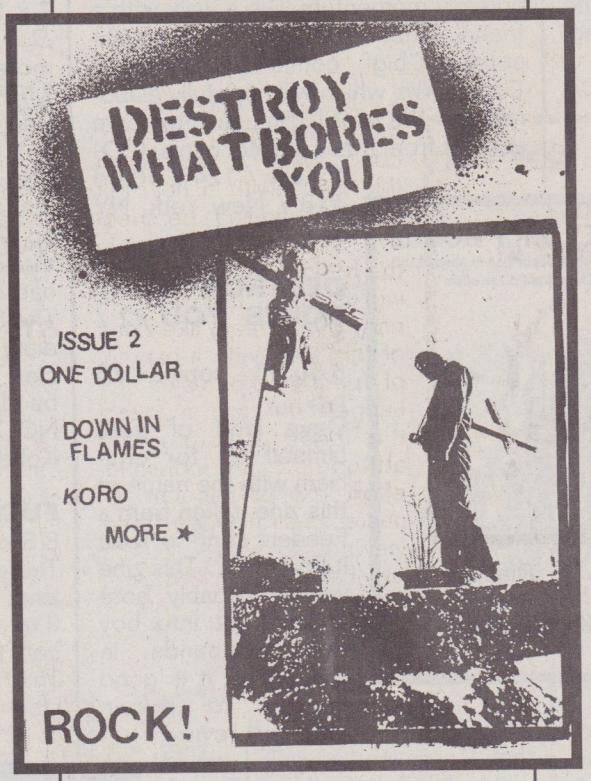


ficult to read, and a few of the writings seemed immature or unnecessarily violent. And there's one thing that really puzzled me: the writer claims to be deaf, but he wrote record reviews in this issue. Huh? (CJ)
Brad Barratt / 1188 Shelburne Rd A-306 / South Burlington, VT 05403

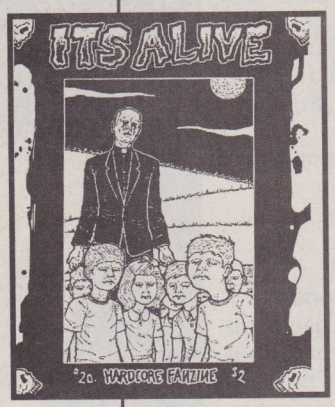
THE HATEMONGER #2 and 3 / ?
5.5 x 8 - copied - 32 pgs
The issue numbers and ordering information were not clear. The issue I speculate is #3 is filled with decent interviews with hardcore and metal bands and Robb *Quickdummies*, plus some "reviews" which are more accurately "an attempt at humorous shit-talking." I didn't think they were that funny, but you might. The second issue has a long-ish story about visiting San Francisco and interviews with little kids, along with some other goofy tales. I'm sure some people would be stoked on the jokes herein, but I wasn't. These aren't so bad, but not so great either. (JM)
1624 N Starrett Rd / Metairie, LA 70003
xgrimwahx@yahoo.com

IRONY IS DEAD #1/ $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs
On the very first page of this zine there is a drawing of a cute dog (oh yeah!), and it only gets better from there. This is a collection of personal but captivating anecdotes illustrated by short comics. Sometimes the stories are a bit confusing but on the whole it's an excellent zine—the way Chelsea relates her experiences is so engaging that, combined with the comics, it almost makes you feel like you were there (yeah, it's cliché to say that, but I mean it). Sometimes funny, sometimes serious, but always entertaining. Plus, it's sewn together with pink thread, and it comes with a sticker! You better get your hands on this zine, or else. (CJ)
Chelsea Beck / PO Box 139 / Tivoli, NY 12583
ironyisdead@hotmail.com

ITS ALIVE #20 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
Hailing from the Nardcore capital of the world, *Its Alive* is absolutely incredible! Awesome photos with great reproduction and tons of fliers



(from the past and present). All done by cut and paste, with excellent layouts and graphics. Featured photos include: Vitamin X, D.O.A, Atom and His Package, BL'AST, Tear it Up, Strike Anywhere, Hot Water Music, Circle Jerks, What Happens Next?, F-Minus, and Leatherface, just to name a few. One guy, one 20 year-old camera, and one super-duper zine. Keep up the great work! $4 if ordering from Canada, $5 rest of the world. (KC)



Fred / PO Box 6326 / Oxnard, CA 93031-6326
itsalive@hotmail.com

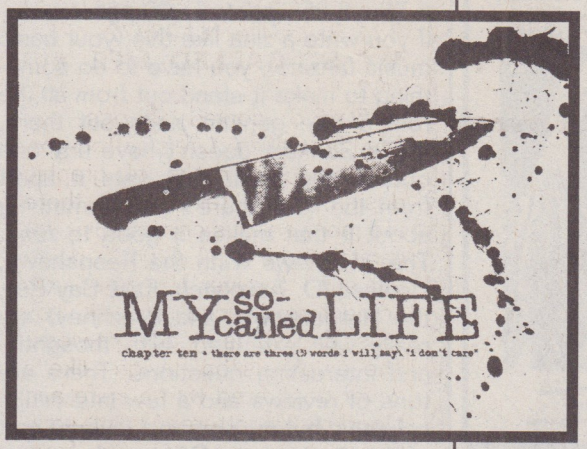
MEATSHEET #5 / $2 (?)
8.5 x 11 - printed - 32 pgs
Nice cut and paste layout combined with solid interviews with Shark Attack, Tear It Up (I love'em too but how many more interviews can we stand?), Agent Orange, Burn and an interview with Sammy from Youth Of today about playing drums make this a definite keeper. Obviously geared more towards the clean cut hardcore side of the coin, it's still a good read despite being a little too nostalgic towards old NYHC for my liking. (MT)
John DeSmet / 138 Washington Rd / Sayreville, NJ 08872

MY SO-CALLED LIFE #10 / $2
5.75 x 8.5 - copied - 38 pgs
My So-Called Life's often-gorgeous layout reeks of graphic design, but, I tell myself, there are more serious crimes. Like not capitalizing the "i". Sigh. I cringe, but still I forgive. The zine *does* come from Vienna, and the editor's English is nearly flawless. The emphasis on design—like a cover decorated with a knife and blood-red spattered paint—distracts you, momentarily, from mostly personal text. This is by turns confessional and desperate—the kind of information that makes you feel sort of uncomfortable though its author is an ocean away. A long interview with Yage, plus really nicely rendered photos, break up the narratives and give you enough breathing room to appreciate the editor's troubled but passionate intent. (AC)
PO Box 65 / 1110 Wien / Austria / veganarchist@yummy.at

NATIVE RESISTANCE TO CANADA / ?
5.5 x 8 - copied - 16 pgs
This short read is made up of overviews of land struggles in (mostly) western Canada. Some of the reports deal with particular recent thefts by the state and some are more long-term histories. If you follow these issues, I'm sure this would be of interest to you. No postal address was listed and I believe a lot of this is available on the internet. Please try this address... (JM)
tintin@tao.ca

NEW FROM THE PARANOID AND DYSFUNCTIONAL #1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 4 pgs
A short zine with a few interviews, reflections on conspiracies, punk politics, and cops. (CR)
3427 Coldwell Dr / Holiday, FL 34691

THE NORTHEASTERN ANARCHIST #4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 48 pgs
Well put together Anarcho-communist zine with a focus on class struggle and organizing techniques, featuring articles on the effectiveness of Black Bloc organizing, union organizing, racism and the class struggle, and a reprint of bell hook's feminist class struggle article. The articles are interesting, though I find that I rarely can relate to the somewhat vanguard/revolution stance that they take on such issues as union organizing. The political self righteousness runs a little too strong for my tastes, though the articles do provide an interesting perspective that help shape my own differing opinions. (CR)
PO Box 230685 / Boston, MA 02123



PICKING UP THE PIECES #3 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
New England teen editor Brent interviews his pals, the Psuedo Heroes, and writes about Olean, New York's DIY show space. In addition, he offers starry-eyed political commentary and some personal prose. Cut 'n' paste, sort of. He accepts trades, but I hesitate to recommend this if you're not also a teen. (AC)
1100 Mercer-New Wilmington Rd. / New Wilmington, PA 16142
picking_up_the_pieces@hotmail.com

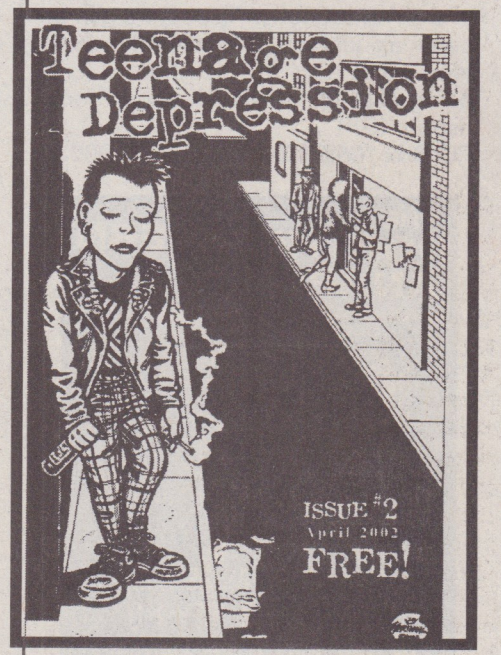
PUNK SHOCKER #10 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 32 pgs
This is a very punk rock zine covering such relevant bands as the Germs and the Angelic Upstarts. They use the cut-and-paste on top of old flyers aesthetic sensibility. That's fine. What's strange is that they went for the expense of a glossy cover with a digital (meaning bad) photo on the front and the c-n-p on the back. So much money, so little sense... The interview with Mensi (Angelic Upstarts) is nice, the press release for the interview (and the issue) is less nice. (AR)
POB ITA, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1TA, England

RADIO STATE #3 / $3 N. America, $5 World
8.5 x 11 - copied - 56 pgs
Editor Mike A. starts off this issue with a heartfelt editorial lending perspective about US actions in the Middle East by reminding us about Beirut in the early 80s. I really like zines of this size: with a handful of friends who make shit happen but still maintain the loose structure and attitude of an individual effort. #3 of this cut 'n' paste zine includes interviews with the Blasphemaut, Fall Silent, Oxbaker, WHN?, Brody's Militia, and much more, including great photo/text footage of Winnipeg's 3-day Arsonfest. Worth your cash and your time. (AC)
PO Box 26014, 116 Sherbrook St / Winnipeg, MB / Canada R3C 4K9

SCUTTER #9 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 22 pgs
Wow, every zine I've gotten this month is by really inspired and enthusiastic authors! This particular one is a youthful queer zine featuring great interviews with Deadlee and Drastico (queer hiphop artists! I never knew!), Pleasant Gehman, Clint Catalyst, The Infinite X's, I Am Loved, and a queer teen (in the "What's Your Story?" section). There are also good pictures and a description of Scutterfest 2001 (hopefully in time to promote Scutterfest 2002?) And best-of lists that made me wanna live in LA (never thought I'd say *that*.) If you like any of the interviewees, are queer, or just play one on TV, you must get this zine. (NN)
PO Box 3247 / Alhambra, CA 91803
scutterzine@yahoo.com

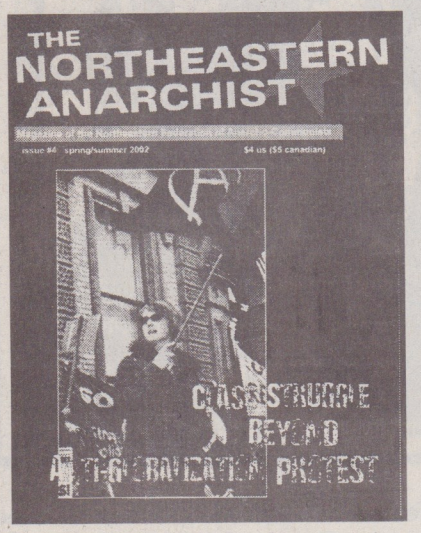
SPIRIT OF FREEDOM Spring 2002 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
This is the newsletter of the North American Earth Liberation Prisoner Support Network. I believe that this is a very important project, if for no other reason than that a group as universally despised and litigated against as ELF (and other eco-activists) is obviously on to something. Within this issue (like most) are details of prisoner's convictions, their contact information, and relevant news of their imprisonment. This issue obviously spends some time on the congressional hearings with Craig Rosebraugh (former spokesperson for the ELF) and reprints several letters to Congress in support of Free and Critter. This is a valuable resource. (AR)
NAELPSN, Box 50082, Eugene, OR 97405

STRAINT #4 & 5 / $1 each
5.5 x 8 - copied - 16 pgs
My initial impression was favorable when I saw these were from the pen (and keyboard) of *MRR* contributor Lane Van Ham, whose work I have liked in the past. I preferred issue five, in which L. discusses a punk academic conference (and his shitty hotel), cowboy style, and a sex worker film festival. The previous issue touched on the Gossip, "the commonality of heteronormativity," and a radical old lady. Both editions have looks at mainstream men's magazines (the *Source* is a men's magazine, ain't it?) and some interesting news clippings. These are quick reads but #5 especially is a good issue. (JM)
Lane Van Ham / 1141 E Adams #6 / Tuscon, AZ 85719

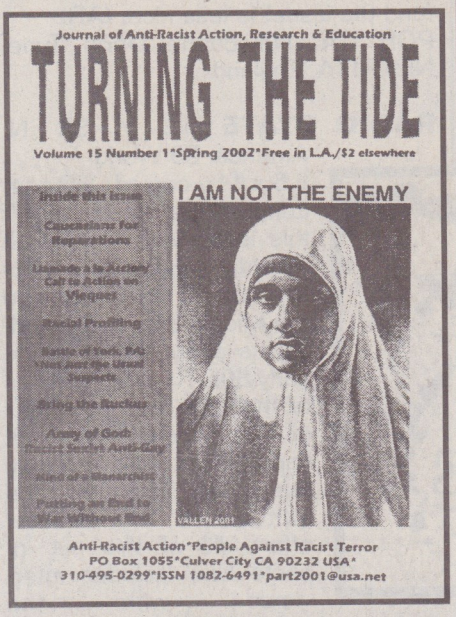


TEENAGE DEPRESSION #2 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 8 pgs
These two kids from Calgary do a radio show called *Teenage Depression*, and this small free zine is the print accompaniment. One band interview, a few pages of record reviews, contact info for record labels: all with a garage slant. The published playlist for the radio show is great, with one show dedicated to all songs Zombie related. Nice cover art as well. (SD)
Teenage Depression / #5, 721-13 Ave SW / Calgary, Alberta / Canada T2R OK8

TURNING THE TIDE Volume 15, #1 / $2
11 x 17 - printed - 14 pgs
A bit predictable and overly familiar, I still found things of interest in here, and I applaud their stance and commitment. Articles on Caucasians for Reparations, racial profiling, the anti-nazi battle in York, PA. I really liked the one on sexism and the anarchist/activist community, especially seeing the idea raised that much of the "direct action" boosters can be seen as just an example of macho men continuing the tradition of only being able to react with anger/domination. (GF)
PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232



UNIDAD PUNK LIBERTARIA #13 / $5
8.5 x 11 - printed - 16 pgs - Spanish
What a great read. This is entirely political, with nary a mention of a band or show, but nonetheless it's punk as fuck. Some of the articles are on the commodification and mainstream images of punk, and they bring it all back to the political roots. There's also a bio of revolutionaries Margarita and Rosaura Ortega, and numerous articles on actions (both military and



counter-) in various parts of Mexico. Strongly recommended. Free to political prisoners. (NN)
Isabel Jerónimo / Apdo M-9364, CP 06002, Admon / Palacio Postal (1) / Mexico, DF
upl_upl@hotmail.com

USUAL SUSPECT #5 / no price listed
5.5 x 8 - copied - 20 pgs
I was excited to see this zine by frequent *MRR* letters contributor (and PA convict) Dave Gurz. But I was disappointed to find very little writing by Dave himself; most of this issue is given over to a reprint of a pamphlet, "the Anarchist Solution to the Problem of Crime." If you wanna read the pamphlet, this is certainly worth a dollar and/or some stamps, as you also get a rant from Dave, some zine reviews, and some flyers to reprint. (JM)
So Chicago ABC Zine Distro / PO Box 721 / Homewood, IL 60430

WIENER SOCIETY #5 / $3, "more if ya can, less if ya can't" or free to prisoners
5.5 x 8 - copied - 84 pgs
Thick as hell and packed with writing (and feeling), *WS* graphically is like the Limp Wrist LP (cut and paste with freaky boys looking all provocative). Thematically, there's a lot of hope in the face of despair as Neil talks about his life in prison, his days as a Nazi and a thieving junkie, unsafe prison sex, his loves and his (bi-)sexuality, his relationship with his parents and even a bit about punk rock and metal. Neil has got a lot to say, and he lays his feelings bare. (JM)
c/o Richard Bump / 109 Arnold Ave / Cranston, RI 02905

ZONKED! #6 / $3 or £1.50
5.75 x 8.25 - printed - 60 pgs
If you write a zine like this (your basic music fanzine), you have to do something to make it stand out from all the rest of the generic zines out there. While *Zonked!* doesn't have any one outstanding point that sets it apart from the rest, there's just something about it that makes it good to read. The interviews (with the Peepshows, Useless ID, Aerobitch, East Bay Ray, the Hellacopters, and Brezhnev) are really well executed, with thoughtful and interesting questions. There are tons of reviews and a few interesting columns, but my personal favorite part of the zine was the DIY travelogues of the editor's adventures in Oslo, Japan, and Normandy. Reading about

other people's experiences traveling made me want to get off my ass and onto a plane. This is a rad zine. (CJ)
50 Hollingbury Rise / Brighton BN1 7HJ / England
pete@zonked138.freeserve.co.uk

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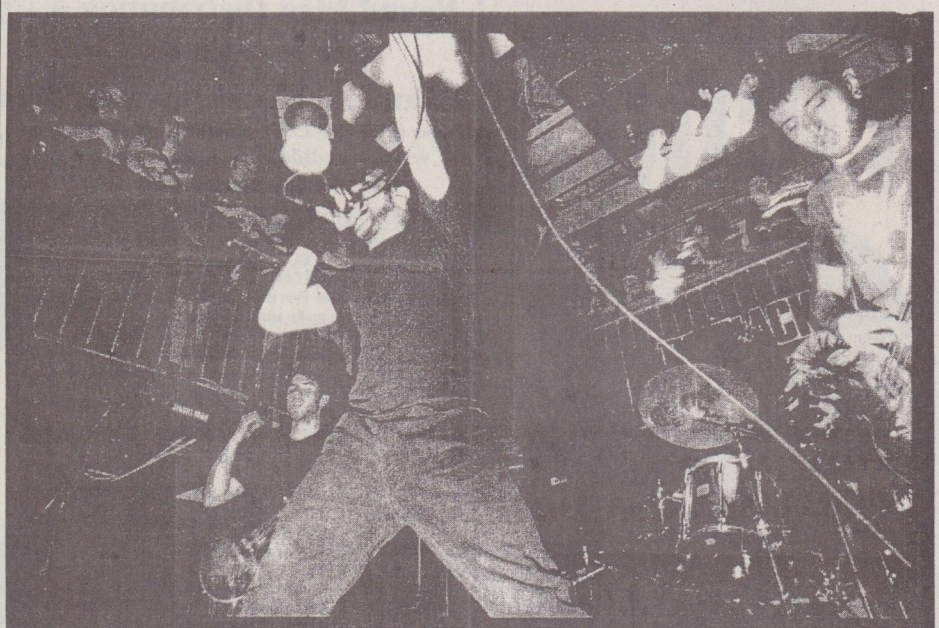

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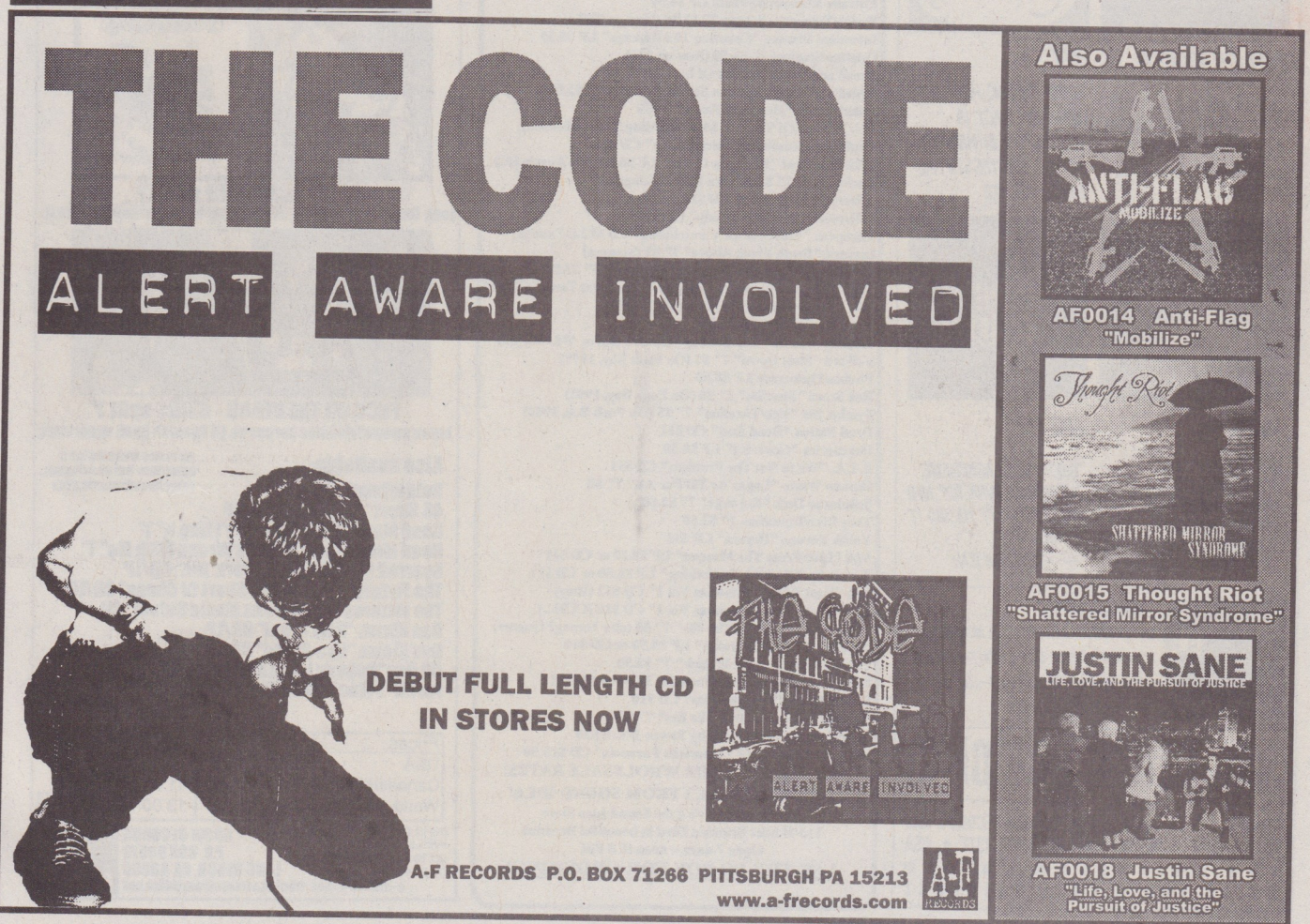

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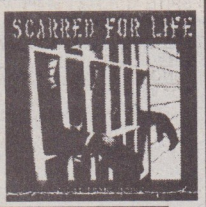

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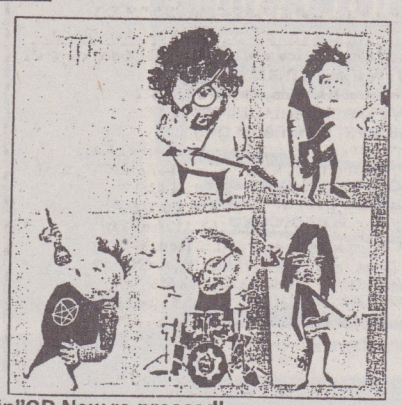

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jul 20 sat Skill Share Benefit
Bands TBA

jul 21 sun 1pm
(GREEN ANARCHY TOUR)
Resist And Exist (L.A.),
Elder Wrath,
Songs for Emma,
John The Baker,
The Singing Crow

July 26/27
Bands TBA

aug 2 fri
The Insurgent (N.Y.),
Prix The Pilot,
Deconditioned (WA),
Blast Fo Me (OR)

aug 3 sat
Enemies (cd release),
The Explosion (MA)
Divit,
Fleshies,
The Blottos (last show),
Maneurysm (WI)

aug 4 sun 5pm
The Locust,
Lightning Bolt,
Arab On Radar,
Hella (Sacramento)

Aug 9 - TBA

aug 10 sat
Dillinger 4 (IL),
Lawrence Arms (IL),
Toys That Kill (L.A.),
The Arrivals,
The Attack (Canada)

Aug 11 Sun.
Yaphet Kotto
Calvary (ex-Current & Ottawa members)
Omega Cinco (spain)
The Shivering

aug 16 fri
Champion (WA),
Terror (L.A.),
Stay Gold (WA),
Circle Takes the Square
Alligiance

aug 17 sat
2 bands t.b.a.
Atrocious Madness (OR),
Bumbklaat (L.A.),
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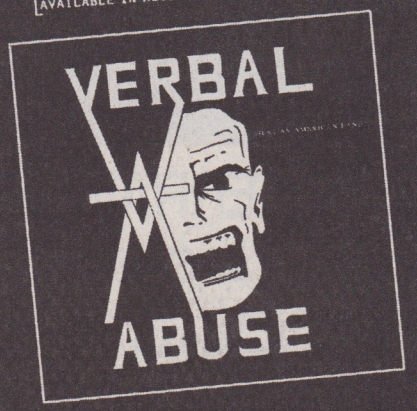

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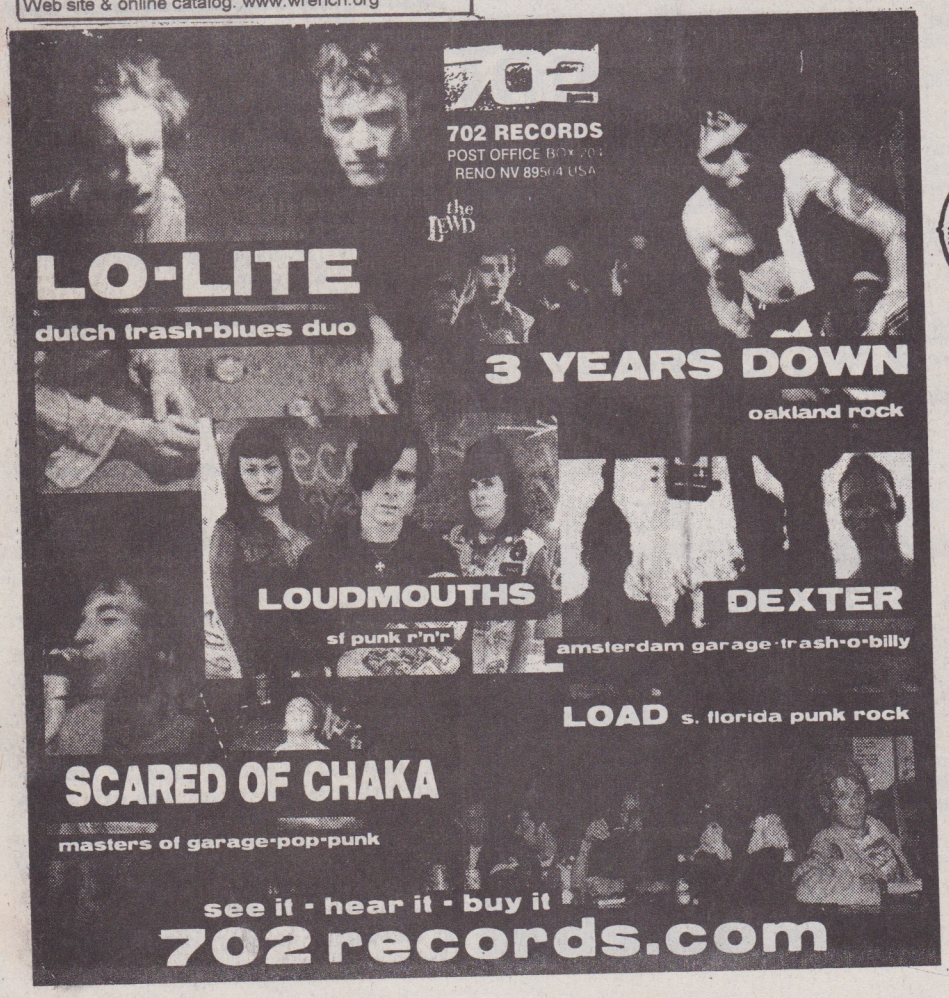

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I FIND BAND'S MEMBER IN LA I wanna play Japanese style band. And I cry Japanese! Please contact me. Notice, I speak English a little. C/o Kotaro Sakai, 3765 Helms Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024, email: znarmz@hotmail.com

JACURUTU: BLUE RECORDS, OHIO Experimental, noisy label. Check out www.geocities.com/jacurutublue...Our now "1 Life Left" (noisy punk project), "Secret Level Mixes" CD for $4! 3727 N. Route 42, Waynesville, OH 45068; jacurutu_blue@yahoo.com

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SELL YOUR BODY to The Strap-Ons. "Geeking Dream" 25 song CD with songs like Strap-On Sally for only $9 postage paid to: CNF, PO Box 8241, Norfolk, VA 23503. Bodies in the streets Limbless Torses begging to die. www.thestrp-ons.com

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RED NET RECORDS is a little SF noise/drone/death jazz record label. We've got records by Leavenworth, Swoon Doll, Bomb Wells Fargo, and more. Order direct from www.rednetrecords.com. Red Net, 608 O'Farrell, #62, San Francisco, CA 94109.ww.worldforfree.com

UKRAINIAN PUNX!!! You out there? I may do a zine about Ukrainian punk, but I also just want to meet some, even if you don't speak UkrainiaGet in touch: Mike Silly, PO Box 30013, Columbia, MO 65201, USA. (Especially people from Lviv or Chicago!!) Mike_Silly@hotmail.com

DOES ANYONE KNOW IF VIKE VRADIY, the "Queen of Ukrainian Punk" who now lives in the states has a band here or a web site? Thanx! Mike Silly, PO Box 30013, Columbia, MO 65201, USA or Mike_Silly@hotmail.com

THE STATISTICS, a political/poppy/punk band wanna tour & need a van! I'd rather rent one from some punk band than a company, or pay gas/food/insurance for some kid with a van who would want to tour. When would we tour? As soon as you get in touch!! Mike_Silly@hotmail.com

WANTS: G-Sage-straight..cd/sacrifice..lp, Icons filth-7"s, Ignition-7"s, J Lunch-cursed..lp, P.I.-pick..7"/getting..12", Posh Boy-singles vol 1 4x7", Proletariat-market..7", Social Dist.-mainliner 7"/1945 7"mommy's..lp(xxx), Skeptix-7"s, TSOL-anticop 7", Toxic Reasons-ghost..7", Wipers-alien..7"/youth..lp/land..cd/live..'84 lp. See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

A FEW YEARS AGO (MAYBE 4?) a band came out with an album that had the exact same cover art as the first solo Danzig lp. Does anyone know what the hell that band was called? Thanx, Mike Silly. Mike_Silly@hotmail.com

FREE DEMO! The Piss Shivers new demo CD "We Are Cheap Dates" is now available for free! 6 offensive old school punk rawk songs. Contact: Spine Punch Distro, PO Box 163, Barto, PA 19504 or Rokkgod@hotmail.com

TRADE ONLY: AYS - some...12", Amebix-monolith lp, Amenity-7" (red) / breathe 7", B Influence-after...10", B Boys-frat...7"(smilin')/wreck coll..lp,B-Bones-dem...lp/ seeing...10", C-Sox-sewerside.lp/ whoops...lp, D-Nasty-85-86 lp, D-Kreuzen-gone..7" (white), Discharge-live '83(207/454), Doom- war.. lp, Exploited-Computers..7". See other ads + wants. Jeremy - #105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

TRADE ONLY: Final Conflict-institution..7"(2-copies), Gastunk-under..(pusmort), GBH-give fire.7"/p-disc 7", G-Matter-Bite..2x7"(maroon), G-Issue- no way..82.lp (green), Helmet-unlive.lp, Heresy/Sox-split.lp/face..lp, Ill Repute-what..lp, JFA-valley..lp,Melvins-gluey..lp(alchemy). See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

TRADE ONLY: M-Threat-buff..7"/demos 81 7", MIA-after..lp, N-Grain-back..lp, NOFX-liza.7" (pink swirl), NOTA-s/t lp, Offenders-endless..lp, P-Crisis-creatures..lp(red)/twighlights..7", P Idea-war..(alchemy)/ian mackaye lp (in your face)/feel..lp, Proletariat-indifference lp. See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

TRADE ONLY: Red Tide-kelp+salel 7", R-Mortis-conveyed..lp, Samhain-on earth..7", Septic Death-attention cd/ozobozo (japan) cd, Shocking Truth-acquaintance 7" (yellow), Simpletones-kirsty q 7" (red), SSD-how..lp, Stalag 13-not same 7"(252/500)/..control mcd, Half Off-shoot..(clear). See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

TRADE ONLY: UC- straight..p-disc lp/staring..lp (red), V/A-pus view cd (japan), V/A-thrash..lp (pusmort), V/A-touch+go 'zine+7"(white), V/A-Vancouver Independence lp (friends), Verbal Assault - learn lp/trial lp/on lp, Void-Condensed..7"(clear), V Circle-price..lp, Visions Change-s/t lp. See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

WANTS: Adolescents-welcome..7", Amebix-7"s/12", A-Orange-secret-7", A-Cimex-criminal..lp, ANL-for you 7"/woman p-disc, Battalion Saints-fighting..12"/rock..lp, CH3-12", D-Kreuzen-cows..7", Discharge-ignorance 7", DOA-ww3 7"/dicso..7"/right..7", Effigies - remains..7"/we're da..12"/haunted..lp, China W-danger..cd, G-Zet-12". See other ads+wants. Jeremy-#105-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y-1X8, Canada.

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